'If you didn't post, did you even go?'

Exploring the extent of young Danish women's displays of touristic experiences on Instagram as a tool for impression management

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to explore the behaviours and motivations of young Danish women sharing travel- or tourism-related content to Instagram.

Women were the focus subjects of this study, seeing that the limited research on the motivations and impression managements of those posting travel related content to social media (SoMe) seldomly looks exclusively at the behaviours of women. However, women especially have been said to be "the pampered children of the market. They hold power in their hands to decide, or at least influence, almost anything, such as cars, technology, tourism, beauty, medicine, household and children's items. This is why brands are increasingly setting their eyes on women, seeking to attract them and keep them loyal" (Connect Americas, 2016). Moreover, young women are of special interest when researching social media behaviours, as the majority of global Instagram users are aged between 18-34 (We Are Social et al., 2022a), and women account for 57% of all Danish Instagram users, with women aged 18-34 representing the largest user base (NapoleonCat, 2022).

The theoretical foundations applied to this study were those of Impression Management and Social Comparison. Impression Management was chosen due to its relevance when researching behaviours on SoMe, as part of the appeal of SoMe sites, such as Facebook and Instagram, lies in their ability to create and manage impressions, and to construct one's identity within an online realm. Social comparison theory was also especially relevant in the study of behaviours on SoMe, as social comparison may, to some extent, form the appeal of SoMe where one has the ability to assess others' profiles (and thereby their lives) through a few clicks and engage in comparison.

A mixed methods research approach was applied to combine both quantitative and qualitative data collections and analysis, in order to obtain nuance as to the phenomenon.

By applying probability sampling to determine the appropriate sample size of 229 Instagram profiles, information related to posting frequency and content type was gathered through quantitative data collection and analysed by way of differential statistical analysis. Results from the quantitative

analysis were integrated in semi-structured interviews with 7 participants within the sample, who had all posted displays of touristic experiences within the last year.

Results from the quantitative data analysis showed that Danish women aged 20-30 display their touristic experiences on Instagram to such an extent that posts displaying touristic experiences account for a mean value of 43% and a median value of 38% of their shared content. Considering that the sample was determined by a 90% confidence level and a 5% confidence interval, it can be concluded with 90% certainty that of all content shared on Instagram by Danish women aged 20-30, a mean of 43% or a median of 38% of their posts display touristic experiences, with a possible +/-5% deviation. Also, a tendency to post touristic experiences within closer intervals and at higher frequencies than non-touristic posts was identified, and this tendency was affirmed through participant interviews as pertaining to mainly using Instagram to mainly display significant life-events and touristic/travel-related experiences.

Upon conducting the 7 semi-structured interviews, they were transcribed and coded in accordance to elements of Impression Management, Social Comparison, results from the quantitative analysis and inductively identified codes.

It was found throughout all participant accounts that they were motivated to impression manage resulting from self-presentational goals of both identity-development, social outcomes of approval and status, and self-esteem maintenance. The publicity of Instagram was relevant to the achievement of all goals pertaining to displaying touristic experiences as a means for self-presentation, and the impressions were mainly constructed around factors of valuable self-concept attributes and desired identity images. Geotagging was identified as one of the specific tools these women used to manage impressions around displays of touristic experiences on Instagram, and upward social comparison drove them to reproduce others' contents on their profiles, or to claim travel-related attributes comparable to that of desirable others. Hence, it was concluded that young Danish women do indeed use online displays of touristic experiences as a tool for impression management.

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Introduction

Photography is central to the tourism experience, and many consider photography and tourism to be intrinsically linked, both as part of destinations' and marketers' efforts to promote tourism destinations as well as by being intimately related to the condition of being a tourist. Urry (1990) links these interconnected phenomena by suggesting that they may constitute a self-reinforcing closed circle of representation in which tourist photographs both reflect and inform destination images (Garrod, 2008). However, it is not only the act of photographing but also the act of sharing these photographs that shapes the tourism experience and ultimately influences the tourism industry at large. With the rise of information and communication technology (ICT) and social media (SoMe), the tourism 'info-structure' has fundamentally changed (Law et al., 2014), and the sharing of travel photography is no longer necessarily confined to a small audience of known members.

While much research within the field of tourism and SoMe has focussed on how exposure to the travel photography and experiences of others through SoMe shapes behaviours of travel information search and destination selection process (Sotiriadis, 2017), less research has focused on how travel and tourism play a part in the identity formation of those posting such content, and its role in impression management efforts. While limited research on the motivations and impression managements of those posting travel related content to SoMe does exist, it seldomly looks exclusively at the behaviours of women.

Many tourism researchers have identified women as being the main holiday decision-makers within family structures. For example, a study by Zalatan (1998) concluded that wives' involvement in holiday decision-making was high in tasks such as shopping, selecting restaurants, collecting information, and preparing luggage, and a study by Mottiar and Quinn (2004) found that women in families play the primary role in the identification stage of holiday choices, the information retrieval process, and in the booking stage of the holiday purchase. Though women's holiday decision-making and power has been largely researched through the lens of their role within family structures, women are increasingly receiving attentions from tourism marketers and destinations, as solo female travel has increased exponentially. According to a 2014 Solo Travel Report from Booking.com, 72% of American women have embraced solo travel, and SoMe plays a significant role in motivating, navigating and empowering these female solo travellers (Booking.com, 2014). This trend of solo

female travel is not confined to American women only: according to TripAdvisor's 2015 Women's Travel Survey, a global average of 74% of women said they had either travelled alone or were planning to do so in the same year (TripAdvisor, 2015). Women's wealth has shown unprecedented growth during the last decade, and according to Boston Consulting Group, women controlled 32% of global wealth in 2020 and predicted that this would rise to 40% by 2023 (Zakrzewski et al., 2020). According to Gabriela Oliván, Director of Corporate Communications at Accenture, women are more active in their participation on SoMe than men, and it is believed that they are driving the trends on these platforms (Connect Americas, 2016). Oliván considers that: "Women today are the pampered children of the market. They hold power in their hands to decide, or at least influence, almost anything, such as cars, technology, tourism, beauty, medicine, household and children's items. This is why brands are increasingly setting their eyes on women, seeking to attract them and keep them loyal" (ibid).

Recent research has found that while both women and men tend to use majorly SoMe for activity-planning and travel arrangements, photos and videos on SoMe influence women's decisions more often than men (Karatsoli & Nathanail, 2020). However, most research into the behaviours of those sharing travel-related content to SoMe has focussed on either TripAdvisor or Facebook (Sotiriadis, 2017), while Instagram, a SoMe platform prioritising visual content, has been decidedly less examined within tourism research. Yet, research commissioned by Facebook (Meta) into the use of Instagram found that 91% of users use the platform to follow an interest and that "travel" ranked at 45% as the most frequent interest pursued by Instagram users (Facebook IQ, 2019), thereby making the platform particularly valuable for DMO's and tourism marketers.

The majority of global Instagram users are aged between 18-34 (We Are Social et al., 2022a), and women account for 57% of all Danish Instagram users, with women aged 18-34 representing the largest user base (NapoleonCat, 2022). While young Danish women represent the largest Instagram user base in Denmark, little is known about their motivations for posting travel-related content to the platform, and no research has focussed on the extent to which they display their touristic experiences on Instagram.

As Instagram represents a powerful communication channel and tool for DMO's and tourism marketers to reach current and prospective customers, involving or targeting young Danish women

on Instagram may help them reach a broader audience and new target segments. However, it is crucial to first understand their behaviours and motivations for sharing travel-related content on this platform, in order to properly target and influence them.

Research question

The aim of this study is to explore exactly this, namely the behaviours and motivations of young Danish women sharing travel- or tourism-related content to Instagram. This has led to the following research question:

To what extent do young Danish women display their touristic experiences on Instagram, and do they use online displays of touristic experiences as a tool for impression management?

Literature review

Over the course of the last decades, the development of ICT has presented unique opportunities and challenges for the tourism and hospitality industry. The first wave of this development, established though the rapid deployment of the Internet and the Web 1.0, brought about the more recent wave of Web 2.0 and the SoMe environment (Law et al., 2014) characteristic of the current developmental phase of the tourism industry. According to a survey by Statista, SoMe usage is one of the most popular online activities, and as of 2020, over 3.6 billion people worldwide were using SoMe. This number was projected to increase to almost 4.41 billion by 2025 (Statista Research Department, 2022), accounting for more than half the world's population. This impressive adoption and extensive use of SoMe has revolutionised all hospitality and tourism-related industries through extensive influential impact on strategic and operational marketing and management functions in the field (Law et al., 2014), impact on consumer behaviour of travellers and tourists through ease in information search and sharing, and impact on the perception and exhibition of mobility patterns as they are now displayed to audiences hitherto unimaginable through the limitlessness of SoMe (Sotiriadis, 2017), as will be explored further in this review.

Naturally, such revolution in the industry has brought about a considerable body of literature about the impacts and consequences of SoMe and user-generated content (UGC) in tourism-related practices. Though broad, the research concerning SoMe and tourism can be divided into two main groups of study:

1) *The supply/provider perspective*: the impact of SoMe users' online reviews and experience sharing of tourism business practices, as well as the commercialisation of SoMe and marketing managerial approach undertaken by said tourism practitioners.

2) *The demand/consumer perspective*: the influence of online reviews and UGC on consumer behaviour, as well as the factors motivating and influencing tourists' and travellers' production of UGC.

These two groups of study have already been identified through several literature reviews and publications (Law et al., 2014; Sotiriadis, 2017; Teare et al., 2015; Zeng & Gerritsen, 2014), yet it should be noted that the field of ICT and SoMe in tourism is rapidly expanding and changing, implying that some of the earlier findings may already be inadequate or redundant to the current environment, where both tourism providers and tourists have been intimate with the strategic use of SoMe for several years. For example, only 8% of U.S. population used any kind of SoMe in 2008, whereas the number had grown to an astonishing 82% by 2021 (Triton Digital, 2021), and the value of global sales through SoMe platforms has been estimated to grow from US$ 560 billion in 2020 to US$ 2.9 trillion by 2026 (Statista, 2021), cementing the relevance of SoMe for tourism-businesses and users, as well as its rapidly changing nature.

The supply/provider perspective of SoMe in tourism

As this study will be concerned with the consumer perspective of SoMe and tourism, so will much of this literature review. However, to fully understand the implications of SoMe and UGC to the tourism industry at large, some of the literature related to the implications of SoMe in tourism from a supply/provider perspective will briefly be reviewed in the following.

The implications of social media and UGC to hospitality and tourism-related practices

One of the main types of research done in relation to the impacts of SoMe on the tourism industry has been the importance of UGC to the practices of hospitality and tourism-related businesses. For example, research on travellers' use of UGC in relation to travel planning found that first-time travellers to a destination used and relied on UGC on SoMe sites a higher rate than return customers (Simms, 2012), illustrating the importance of UGC for expanding a tourism business' consumer base (Zeng & Gerritsen, 2014). Furthermore, Lee and Blum (2015) found that hotel managers responded more often to positive than negatives reviews, through an exploratory study of hotels' responses to online reviews. The findings uncovered, however, that responding to negative reviews offered a chance for service recovery and to signal caring and sincerity to other readers and potential guests. Moreover, the findings illustrated the need for a designated person to monitor online comments/reviews and to communicate with reviewers, in order to manage the hotel's online reputation (Lee & Blum, 2015).

The evolution of SoMe and UGC has not only impacted managerial practices such at the latter, but also challenges customer service practices, marketing, and promotional processes throughout the sector (Sigala et al., 2012, as cited in Zeng & Gerritsen, 2014), and as suggested by Fotis, Rossides, and Buhalis "the presence of social media seems to have caused an increasing mistrust for traditional marketing tactics, as well as diminishing the effect of traditional mass media" (2010, as cited in Zeng & Gerritsen, 2014). This notion can be supported by a study from Xiang and Gretzel (2010) investigating the use of search engines for travel planning, where it was found that SoMe sites constitute a considerable part of the search results, implying that search engines are likely to direct travellers to SoMe sites in their travel planning search (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). Such findings confirmed the, at the time, growing importance of SoMe in the tourism domain, and provided evidence for challenges faced by traditional tourism marketers and providers of travel-related information (ibid). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) advised tourism marketers and businesses wishing to succeed in this new realm to acknowledge that social media marketing is about participation, sharing, and collaboration instead of obvious attempts at advertising and selling.

Though such literary findings illustrate how SoMe has created challenges to the traditional ways of marketing and consumer communication, they also provide new means for tourism-related businesses

and destination marketing organisations (DMOs) to reassess their business models and operations through changes and accommodations to existing services, marketing, and communications practices. However, while much of the literature and findings related to the supply/provider perspective of SoMe in tourism has shed light on how tourism businesses and marketers should change their approaches and consider the impacts of SoMe in their practices, one could argue that, in today's environment, SoMe has become integrated in nearly all tourism-related practices. Hence, though some of the findings above may have laid the groundwork for how actors in the tourism industry should act and respond to the impacts of SoMe, technological advances and behavioural changes have since changed the environment to such an extent that these earlier findings could now be seen as second-nature to the current practices of tourism-related actors.

The demand/consumer perspective of SoMe in tourism

The second major research focus within SoMe and tourism concerns the demand/consumer perspective. This branch of research can be divided into two sub-categories concerned with either consumption or production of/on SoMe, namely 1) the influence of online reviews and UGC on touristic consumer behaviour, and 2) the factors motivating and/or influencing tourists/travellers to produce UGC on SoMe.

Both sub-categories, and the literature concerning them, will be separately reviewed in the following.

The influence of social media and UGC on consumer behaviour

Consumers have increasingly turned to the internet as their first choice in the search for information on tourism destinations and providers (Sotiriadis, 2017), and UGC in the form of online reviews and shared experiences is estimated to influence more than US$10 billion in online travel purchases every year (Nusair et al., 2013). According to marketing research conducted by Mackenzie (2011, cited in Bilgihan et al., 2016), 81% of online population received recommendation from friends and other SoMe users before a purchase decision, and 74% of those found recommendations and reviews to be influential in their decision-making process. Moreover, an estimated half of Facebook members use the site to get travel-related information (ibid), whereas more recent research shows that over 20% of

American travellers' destination decisions were influenced by friends' and relatives' posts on SoMe, and, in the case of American Millennials, the number was closer to 25% when choosing travel destinations (U.S. Travel Association, 2016).

Many studies have been conducted on why consumers turn to SoMe sites and online review sites such as TripAdvisor in their information search and decision-making processes, and on what factors lead consumers to trust such information. Filieri et al. (2015) conducted a study testing a model of antecedents and consequences of trust for consumer-generated media (CGM) like TripAdvisor. Their results showed that the strongest predictors of website trust were information quality, customer satisfaction, and website quality, whereas source credibility and user experience did not influence users' trust (Filieri et al., 2015). Their results also proved the importance of trust towards CGM, as trust affects consumer behaviour in the forms of recommendation adoption and word of mouth (ibid).

Other studies concerned with the influence of UGC in the form of online reviews on consumer behaviour have found that tourists' travel planning- and decision-making process are influenced by several factors, including source credibility and attitude (Ayeh, 2015; H. A. Lee et al., 2011), evaluation of reviews (Tsao et al., 2015; Vermeulen & Seegers, 2009), and perceived benefits of using SoMe (Parra-López et al., 2011). Hence, the literature more than concludes that tourists and consumers of tourism-related information on SoMe are influenced by the opinions expressed through UGC when making destination-, purchase-, and planning-decisions.

In a literature review compiled by Sotiriadis (2017), reviewing a total of 146 articles concerned with SoMe in tourism, TripAdvisor was the single most examined online platform (19.4%), second only to the study of SoMe platforms in general (30.8%) (Sotiriadis, 2017). The reasoning for this dominant research focus on TripAdvisor is explained by it being the website most used by consumers, and researchers easily having data access (ibid). This could be seen as presenting somewhat of a deficiency in the literature, as TripAdvisor is predominantly a review-site by nature. It is, however, not used as a platform where individual users portray identity and personality and interact with audiences of friends, relatives and publics, to the same extent as SoMe sites such as Facebook and Instagram, thereby largely leaving aside aspects of peer-to-peer communication on such SoMe sites. Also, as TripAdvisor is purposely used for either the production or consumption of reviews, users are

not involuntarily exposed to the experience sharing of others, rather they information is deliberately sought out.

This literary gap is addressed by Liu et al. (2019) in a study focused on the experience of benign envy toward others' positive travel experience sharing on social networking sites among Millennial consumers. Millennials were chosen as the focus of this study, as peer-to-peer communication on social media is particularly influential for Millennial travellers (Bolton et al., 2013, cited in Liu et al., 2019) and as multiple news sources have reported that Millennial consumers are more likely than other groups to social comparison and to feel envy when exposed to peers' SoMe posts (Liu et al., 2019), substantiating the power of peer influence on Millennials' travel consumption behaviour. Their study sought to examine the psychological mechanisms underlying how Millennial consumers' destination visit intentions are influenced by their peers' travel experience sharing on SoMe, employing social comparison theory to demonstrate boundary conditions in which the social comparison mechanism drives destination visit intentions of Millennials (ibid). The study employed a conceptual framework proposing a three-way interaction effect among 1) the luxuriousness of shared travel experience, 2) similarity between the experience sharer and the focal consumer, and 3) the focal consumer's trait self-esteem on his or her destination visit intention. Through a mixed experimental design, different scenarios focusing on aspects of luxury/non-luxury destinations and similar/dissimilar SoMe friends were imagined and shown to the study-participants consisting of 303 U.S.-based Millennial adult consumers. Results showed significant three-way interaction among antecedents of upward social comparison on destination visit intention, and especially in cases where positive travel experiences were shared by a SoMe "friend" perceived as similar, participants exhibiting lower trait self-esteem showed higher visit intention to luxury destinations compared to non-luxury destinations. Furthermore, a significant conditional indirect effect was found between luxuriousness of shared travel experience and destination visit intention through mediation of benign envy, in cases where the experience sharer was considered similar and where the participant had low trait self-esteem. According to Liu et al. (2019, 363) "the mediating effect of benign envy reinforces the existence of upward social comparison as an underlying mechanism of the impact of positive travel experience sharing, as upward social comparison is a necessary condition for eliciting benign envy". Hence, these results are indicative of individuals with low self-esteem being more likely to engage in social comparison and being more susceptible to peer influence, and that destination visit intention is triggered by benign envy toward the experience sharer.

The study by Liu et al. (2019) presents a more contemporary view of how UGC and SoMe influences touristic consumer behaviour compared to older studies focused on sites such as TripAdvisor, where the information search is much more voluntary and where the reviewer is mainly unknown to the reader. Moreover, it contributes relevant knowledge of the behaviours of Millennial consumers, one of the most promising market segments of the global tourism industry.

The motivational factors actuating consumers' production of UGC on social media

The second aspect of the consumer perspective of SoMe in tourism, namely the factors motivating and/or influencing tourists/travellers to produce UGC on SoMe, is also the least studied aspect of SoMe in tourism. According to Heinonen (2011, as cited in Bilgihan et al., 2016, 288), most SoMe users "are lurkers who read discussions, reviews, and feedback but rarely or never participate", and Bilgihan et al. (2016) stated that the motives of travellers to share their experiences and knowledge on SoMe had not been examined. Though the motives and behaviours of those producing travel related UGC on SoMe have since been examined by several academics, Bilgihan et al. (2016) were some of the first to address this area through a study aimed to develop a theoretical model that tests the precursors of "intention to share knowledge" behaviours in the context of online social networks (OSN). Their results showed that perceived ease of use of the OSN and belief in integrity positively influence knowledge sharing behaviours, and that utilitarian beliefs and subjective norms positively influence belief in integrity (Bilgihan et al., 2016).

While their results did contribute to the uncovering of user-motives to share knowledge on travel-related SoMe sites, the study was not directed at any particular site. Different SoMe sites have different use-purposes, and one could argue that the motives for sharing travel-related knowledge on SoMe is site-specific, and that these findings are thereby only applicable to the motives of users of e.g., review-sites. This excludes the motives of those sharing travel-related knowledge on sites such as Facebook or Instagram, as these sites are not solely concerned with the sharing of travel related information.

Other studies focusing on the main motivators of tourists for involvement in SoMe, and the factors influencing them to produce UGC, have uncovered that prominent drivers for producing travel-related

UGC include motives of reciprocity/altruism, enjoyment/self-enhancement, venting (Yoo & Gretzel, 2011), community-related motivations, maintaining social connections and friendship, and experience-recognition (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014), while users posting on SoMe sites such as Facebook appear to do so for construction of personal identities through sharing and reliving travel experiences (Wilson et al., 2012).

This last motivational factor, construction of personal identities and reliving travel experiences, has also been studied by Gössling and Stavrinidi (2016) in terms of representations of mobilities and their role in social networking on Facebook. Through a qualitative exploratory research approach, they investigated the portrayed mobility patterns of one Millennial network on Facebook, through the analysis of 50 profiles, including their texts, photographs, photo albums and check-ins. The study analysed this in connection to notions of social connectedness and social identity formation in the context of travel and tourism, as well as the role and functions of mobilities with regard to the formation of network capital and social status (Gössling & Stavrinidi, 2016). The results of this study confirmed that mobilities are a key feature of self-presentations, with mobility-related content being ubiquitous in status updates, check-ins, texts, links, photographs and photo albums. It was found that profile owners referred to mobility in six dimensions, with four being linked to corporeal mobility: future travel plans, transit travel, being in the destination, returning home, imaginative travel, and travel philosophy (ibid). Results showed a notable absence of discussions of troubles, such as illnesses, delays, cultural misunderstandings, or crime, which Gössling and Stavrinidi (2016) explain by exhibitions of mobility being glamorized in contemporary society, where all travel-related communication is positive, having repercussions for identity formation. Moreover, the authors argued that practices of travel are also practices of self-representation, reflecting on one's travelness, social connectedness or both, and as frequent and distant travel constitutes social capital, network members derive social status out of their mobility patterns (ibid).

While this study contributes important findings to links between travel related UGC on SoMe and social connectedness, identity, and the exhibition of mobility, the results should be considered in the light of the analysed SoMe platform. As the authors state themselves, Facebook itself serves as a mediator for showcasing one's mobility, by encouraging users to disclose such information through questions such as 'What's on your mind?', 'What are you doing?', 'Who are you with?' or 'Where are you?', or requests to 'share where you are going to get tips and advice' (Gössling & Stavrinidi,

2016). This, in turn, raises the question of whether it is the functionality and system-limitations of a SoMe platform that urges it users to share such mobility patterns or whether certain SoMe users have developed an intrinsic 'need' for sharing such travel-related and identity-expressing/forming UGC.

A study by Lyu (2016) examined the underlying motivations related to women's strategic self-presentation behaviours when posting travel selfies on SoMe. Strategic self-presentation, also referred to as impression management, is defined by Goffman as "a purposeful process for packaging and editing the self to distribute positive impressions to others" (1959, as cited in Lyu, 2016, 185). Several mobile applications like Instagram, Photoshop, Facetune etc. allow users to edit, enhance, and manipulate their appearance in (travel) selfies, which has substantially promoted the strategic self-presentational phenomenon (Hancock & Toma, 2009, as cited in Lyu, 2016). The study examined these tendencies in women, as women are more sensitive to having others' look at their appearance than men, and as women are more likely to treat their appearance as objects that are evaluated by others' perspectives (Lyu, 2016). An online survey was conducted to collect data from 394 Korean female domestic tourists in their twenties and thirties, as the researchers believed that they were more willing than other age groups to engage in travel selfie editing for their SoMe pages. Results showed that appearance surveillance had a positive effect on travel selfie editing behaviours, and that female tourists increased purposeful efforts to fabricate travel selfie images using different applications and software packages as they monitored their outer appearance more often (ibid). Moreover, the study provided empirical evidence that strategic self-presentation effectuated by female tourists can become a behavioural consequence of their self-objectification process, which can be related to feminist theories underscoring that women continually adopt others' gaze on their physical selves for successful socialisation (Lyu, 2016).

This study has several implications for both practitioners and researchers; tourism practitioners and destination marketers need to identify and implement strategies to help female tourists convey these desired impressions and engage in the distribution of positive destination images through SoMe. Moreover, destination marketers must be aware of how untruthful destination images, edited and distributed by (female) tourists engaging in strategic self-presentation, may deteriorate the reliability of promotional efforts made by tourism marketers (Lyu, 2016). Researchers must be aware of how self-representation and objectification impact women's production and distribution of UGC on SoMe, both in the context of travel selfies and other touristic images, when conducting research on tourists'

sharing behaviours on SoMe. While this study constitutes a homogenous sample of Korean female domestic tourists, implying limited generalisability across populations, it presents the opportunity of further research across other population groups.

Another study focusing on the impression management of young travellers posting on SoMe was conducted by Schwarz (2021). It investigated the self-presentations of 27 young volunteer-tourists when they visually communicate their experiences to SoMe audiences. The author sought to understand how young people make meaning of their experiences before, during, and after a short-term international volunteer excursion in Kenya, and employed a framework combining Urry's "tourist gaze" with Goffman's "presentation of self" (Schwarz, 2021). Through a categorial-content analysis of repeated semi-structured interviews with volunteer tourists and photographic content posted to their Facebook profiles, the author was able to identify some familiar touristic scenes expressed through different posted settings. The most common impression given by the participants was that of the family gaze, where the social nature of the excursion and the established friendships were emphasised. Secondly, the romantic gaze was expressed through sharing photos of wildlife and landscapes, where, notably, built structures were not featured in any, as participants admitted cherry-picking the more sensational moments of their trip for public display, as they believed this would be of interest to their audiences. Finally, some participants emphasised the riskier aspects of their excursion, which the author refers to as a representational choice called the "gutsy gaze" (Schwarz, 2021). Results of the study showed that participants' visual narrative shared on SoMe contradicted some of the sentiments they had expressed during the interviews, seeing that participants had differentiated their excursion from mass tourism through their interviews, yet presented it as a holiday to their SoMe audiences. The gazes exhibited through the participants visual narratives on SoMe coalesced to reveal an idealised impression of the participants excursion (Schwarz, 2021). This study presents interesting findings about the impact of self-presentational efforts of young volunteer travellers on SoMe, as it reveals that they engage in strategic impression management inconsistent with their own expressed beliefs.

Finally, the role of impression management in the production and distribution of online tourist photography has also been explored in a 2015 study by Lo and McKercher. The study adopted a reflexive, ethnographic visual approach and semi-structured interviews to guide data collection and analysis, with a total of 13 study-participants aged between 18-35 and using SoMe to post travel

photographs. This sample was chosen as the younger generation seems to be more proactive in managing impressions through sharing photographs online (Lo & McKercher, 2015). A five-stage image selection process closely tied to impression management was identified. The five stages were 1) pre-production, which was concerned with the decision to bring a camera along for the travels, 2) on-site production, concerned with the act of *how* to photograph something and *what* to photograph (i.e. with what equipment, what pictures to take, etc.), 3) post-production cutting, concerned with selection of potential photographs for uploading, 4) post-production editing and distribution, concerned with conscious editing choices and sentiments bound to posting the photographs, and 5) critique and reception, concerned with post-editorial choices based on audience reactions and (un)desired responses (Lo & McKercher, 2015). Results showed that impression management underpinned all five stages of the tourist image production process, and that the impression management was especially conscious during the later stages of the process. The study suggests that SoMe and photography facilitate social comparison, thereby rapidly redefining the tourist gaze (Lo & McKercher, 2015). The authors also suggest that research on the role of online images in shaping destination image and future travel decisions must consider the performative nature of travel photography and how self-presentational efforts and impression management guides the entire process. They argue that the decision of what images to upload may have less to do with how to best reflect the destination and travel experience, and more to do with how to best reflect the performers' desired self-image (ibid).

Implications for further research

While the studies focusing on the motives of SoMe users posting travel-related UGC have indeed found links between impression management and the sharing of travel-related UGC, all have taken either a qualitative or a quantitative approach to data collection. For example, the study by Gössling and Stavrinidi (2016) analysed 50 Facebook profiles through a qualitative exploratory research approach but did not explore the phenomenon further through inquiry with the actual profile owners about their motivations. The study by Lyu (2016) collected data through online surveys from 394 Korean female domestic tourists to investigate the underlying motivations related to women's strategic self-presentation behaviours when posting travel selfies on SoMe but did not use any visual data from these women's SoMe profiles to establish correlation between their stated behaviours and their actual behaviours. Furthermore, the studies by Schwarz (2021) and Lo and McKercher (2015)

both collected visual data and participant accounts from 27 volunteer tourists and 13 study-participants aged 18-35 respectively, yet, while they did find interesting links between both the tourist gaze, impression management and motivations to share travel-related UGC on SoMe, both studies had relatively small samples that would not necessarily generate results representative of a larger population group.

In summation, the presented literature contains some gaps applicable for further research. The literary gaps which will be investigated in this study are:

1) Self-presentational efforts and exhibitions of touristic mobility on SoMe sites where i) sharing of travel-experiences is not the main use-purpose, and ii) where functionality and system-limitations are not designed as "mobility mediators"
2) The extent to which young women post travel-related UGC on SoMe
3) The motivations of young women engaging in impression management and their motivations for displaying touristic mobility as a tool for impression construction
4) The impact of social comparison on SoMe from the perspective of production, rather than consumption

Theory

In the following, the theoretical approach of this thesis will be presented. The theories which will form the basis for analysis are Impression Management and Social Comparison theory. Both theories have emerged within the fields of social science and psychology but have been extensively used within tourism research. The first theory, Impression Management, comprises a two-component framework to guide analysis, whereas social comparison theory allows for discussion based on the analysis findings.

The use of impression management theory may be especially relevant when researching behaviours on SoMe. Part of the appeal of SoMe sites, such as Facebook and Instagram, lies in their ability to create and manage impressions, and to construct one's identity within an online realm. The system-opportunities and limitations of such SoMe sites provide the individual with a somewhat clear idea

of their audience, while also allowing for impression management through a number of privacy settings and profile set-ups. Most importantly, however, I would argue that it is the deliberateness of engaging on SoMe that makes it relevant for researching motivations of impression management. This is not to say that the process of impression management is deliberate, rather that the act of showcasing oneself on SoMe by partaking in acts related to posting about one's experiences requires deliberate action. As observed by Kernis and Goldman (2005) digital technologies "allow for self-relevant information to be instantaneously accessed, refined, indeed, even fabricated" in self-presentation (as cited in Belk, 2013, 489), and Belk (2013, 490) argues that, as a result of digital technologies and SoMe, the self is "much more actively managed, jointly constructed, interactive, openly disinhibited, confessional, multiply manifest, and influenced by what we and our avatars do online".

The two-component model, which will be presented shortly, presents a framework for analysis of *why* people engage in impression management. The aim of this research is not to assert *how* young women manage their impression with the use of displaying travel-behaviours on SoMe, rather it is about the *why*. Hence, this impression management framework will be employed in the attempt to uncover a somewhat generalisable *why* for young women's impression management. Such knowledge may be beneficial to tourism marketers and businesses, as it can present tools for what to direct at this market-segment for them to engage in impression management that benefits these stakeholders.

Impression management theory does share some similarities with Destination Image Formation, a term extensively used within tourism research describing the process of destinations' forming an image of what they have to offer, that is intricately intertwined with tourists' destination selection process (Gartner, 1994), as a destination image is affected by both stimulus elements of the 'product' and the characteristics of the perceiver (Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990, in Baloglu & McCleary, 1999).

While the image formation process is concerned with how destinations' form an image to be perceived by tourists through a strategic branding process, impression management is concerned with how individuals create and maintain impressions of themselves to be perceived by others, for one reason or the other. Hence, image formation concerns larger scale entities as destinations, brands, organisations etc., while impression management is concerned with the image formation and management of individuals.

Social comparison theory is also especially relevant in the study of behaviours on SoMe, as social comparison may, to some extent, form the appeal of SoMe where one has the ability to assess others' profiles (and thereby their lives) through a few clicks and engage in comparison. Moreover, as SoMe makes it easy to selectively portray positive aspects of one's life, upward social comparisons are more likely to occur as users are more often confronted with the successes than the failures of their online connections (Verduyn et al., 2020). SoMe has thereby intensified the social comparison process, seeing that it has become considerably 'simpler' to be exposed to idealised images of others and more easily share self-enhancing information about oneself (ibid).

Impression Management

Impression management, also known as self-presentation, refers to the processes by which individuals try to control how others perceive them (Leary, 2001). The concept of impression management was popularised by Erving Goffman in his book *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life.* Goffman theorised that people can influence others to respond to them in desired ways and obtain various goals, by consciously and unconsciously conveying particular impressions of their abilities, attitudes, motives, status, emotional reactions, and other personal characteristics (Goffman, 1959). In this well-known work, Goffman created the foundation and defining principles of what is now commonly referred to as impression management (Nickerson, 2022), which has since been used and adapted by many within the field of social sciences.

Social scientist had long been attracted by the explanatory possibilities of the analogy between the theater and "real life", and it is an analogy that has been widely used, seeing "actors" performing "roles" on a "social stage" (Fallers, 1962), however, Goffman was the first to develop a specific theory concerning self-presentation (Nickerson, 2022). Goffman takes the analogy between theatre and "real life" more seriously, and uses it in its most suggestive context, namely the detailed analysis of face-to-face encounters between persons (Fallers, 1962), wherein actors give different performances in front of different audiences, and the actors and the audience cooperate in negotiating and maintaining the definition of a situation (Nickerson, 2022).

It was especially these encounters between persons that Goffman was interested in, as he perceives social encounters to be mediated by the impressions that people form of one another, and that smooth

and effective interpersonal interaction requires each interactant to project a public identity to guide others' behaviours (Goffman, 1959). Impression management is thereby central to the social encounters between people, and Goffman argues that when entering the presence of others, people communicate information by verbal intentional methods and by non-verbal unintentional methods (Nickerson, 2022). Individuals participate in social interactions through performing a "line" or a pattern of both verbal- and non-verbal acts, by which the individual expresses their view of the situation, and through this, their evaluation of the participants and themselves. Through successful enactments of such lines, a person gains positive social value or "face" (ibid).

People use many different behaviours in the service of impression management, and any behaviour conveying information about an individual may be used as a self-presentation tactic. This does, however, not mean that all behaviour is necessarily self-presentational, but that individuals can engage in practically any behaviour for self-presentational purposes (Leary, 2001). Moreover, though self-presentation can be used as a deceitful and manipulative means of influencing other people, it should not be considered as deceitful/manipulative in nature, but rather as a condition of social interactions.

Determinants of Impression Management

People engage in strategic impression management for several reasons, and often to ensure that people view them accurately. As personal characteristics and inner states are invisible to other people, or at least not always obvious to them, individuals engage in impressions management to ensure they are perceived accurately (Leary, 2001). Moreover, though people sometimes tend to present images of themselves that they know are untrue, people are more likely to present those aspects of themselves which they believe will help them achieve their interpersonal goals in the given situation or try to enhance or highlight aspects that they believe are socially desirable. Goals are often achieved if people are perceived as likeable, competent, ethical, or otherwise socially desirable than if others perceive them negatively, hence, strategic impression management is often engaged in to present desirable impressions (ibid).

Self-Presentational Goals driving Impression Management Motivations

As determined, people monitor the ways in which they are perceived by others on an ongoing basis. However, the degree to which people are motivated to engage in impression management, and the nature of the impressions they try to convey, vary across situations and individuals (Leary, 2001). With basis in previous research within the field of psychology and social sciences, Leary and Kowalski (1990) defined three primary interrelated self-presentational motives, or rather goals, driving the subsequent motivation for impression management:

Social and material outcomes

By conveying the right impressions when dealing with others, people might maximize their cost-reward ratio, thereby increasing the likelihood of obtaining desired outcomes and avoiding undesired outcomes. Some desired outcomes are interpersonal, such as approval, friendship, assistance, power, status, etc., while others are material, such as being viewed in competent resulting in a raise (Leary & Kowalski, 1990).

Self-esteem maintenance

People may also engage in self-presentational behaviour to regulate their self-esteem, as others' reactions to the individual can either raise or deflate self-esteem. People often try to make impressions that will elicit esteem-enhancing reactions, such as compliments, praise, and indications of liking, while avoiding self-esteem deflecting criticism and rejection, especially in situations where feedback is expected from others. Self-esteem is also affected by individuals' self-evaluations of their performances and the imagined reactions of others (Leary & Kowalski, 1990).

Development of identity

Finally, people engage in self-presentations as a means of creating their identity. Identity is ultimately derived from society, hence, people sometimes self-symbolise, by engaging in public behaviours indicating the possession of identity-relevant characteristics (Leary & Kowalski, 1990).

Components of Impression Management

Leary and Kowalski (1990) developed a two-component model conceptualising impression management as being composed of two discrete processes, determining the antecedents of impression management. These determinants are Impression Motivation and Impression Construction, and both interact in the degrees to which an individual will engage in strategic impression management. This model was developed in order to reduce the myriad of variables affecting impression management to the smallest possible set of theoretically meaningful factors, and to classify the two discrete processes of impression management, each operating according to different principles, and each being affected by different situational and dispositional antecedents (Leary & Kowalski, 1990).

Impression Motivation

Three primary, yet interrelated, factors are relevant in the degree to which people are motivated to engage in impression management in order to control how people perceive them. These factors are goal-relevance, goal-value, and discrepancy between desired and current image. Each of these factors increase the degree to which people attempt to control the impressions of others, as each factors affects the attainment of self-presentational goals (Leary & Kowalski, 1990).

1. Goal-relevance

When people believe that their public images are relevant to the attainment of desired goals, they are more motivated to control how others perceive them through strategic impression management. Vice versa, when the impressions and perceptions formed by others have no or few outcomes for achieving one's desired goals or outcomes, the motivation to engage in strategic impression management will be low (Leary, 2001). For example, people are more likely to impression-manage in interactions with powerful, high-status people, than with less powerful, low-status individuals. The perceived relevance of the goal will thereby be proportionate to the degree to which the individual engages in impression-management.

The central factor determining the goal-relevance is the publicity of one's behaviour, as "publicity is a function of both the probability that one's behaviour will be observed by others and the number of others who might see or learn about it" (Leary & Kowalski, 1990, 38). Therefore, the more public peoples' behaviour is, the more likely they are to being concerned with how it appears to others, thereby motivating them to impression manage. However, private behaviours may also be affected by self-presentational motives, as people may privately prepare to perform public impression-relevant behaviours (Leary & Kowalski, 1990).

Furthermore, the individual's dependency on the target also affects the goal-relevance of impressions, as dependency on others for achieving valued outcomes impacts the importance of impressions. Also, the more contact the individual expects to have with the target impacts the relevance of impressions, and future interactions expected with the target thereby impact the likeliness of trying to control how one is perceived by others (Leary & Kowalski, 1990).

2. *Goal-value*

The second factor relevant to the motivation of impression management is goal-value. People are more motivated to engage in impression management the more they perceive their public image as valuable for their goals. Hence, if the achievement of valuable, highly desirable goals depends on the impressions others form of them, people are more motivated to control how they are perceived than when the goals themselves are less valuable (Leary, 2001).

Moreover, the value of outcomes increases as their availability decreases, hence, impression motivation is higher when desired resources are scarce (Leary & Kowalski, 1990), for example in competitive situations or environments.

Furthermore, characteristics of the target also determine the importance of creating an impression, as some targets lead individuals to monitor and control their impressions due to the personal or social attributes of the target. Hence, people are more motivated to manage impressions for people who are of high status, powerful, attractive, or likable than for those who are less so, as target with these characteristics are more likely to satisfy people's goal motives (Leary & Kowalski, 1990).

Targets with these valuable personal or social attributes may also affect self-esteem, as people value their evaluations and reactions more than they value those of less desirable persons. Targets with certain attributes may also be more relevant to the development of particular identities (Leary & Kowalski, 1990), and thereby more important for impression management when the goal pertains to identity development.

3. *Discrepancy between desired and current image*

Finally, people are more motivated to impression-manage if/when a discrepancy exists between how they want to be perceived and how they believe people currently perceive them. Hence, public failures, embarrassing events, or other forms of (mis)judgements that are discrepant from the public image people want others to hold, will motivate people to engage in strategic impression-management to repair their perceptions of damaged reputations (Leary, 2001).

People facing a possible threat to their social image may even pre-emptively engage in precautionary self-presentational behaviour, before actually 'failing' (Leary & Kowalski, 1990). Also, public failure, embarrassment, or (mis)judgement before one target may lead to more positive self-presentations to others unaware of the failure. Even failures know only to the individual can affect impression-relevant behaviour, and, in both instances, people may use impression management to salvage self-esteem and bolster desired private identities called into question by the predicament (Leary & Kowalski, 1990).

Impression Construction

Once people are motivated to manage their impressions, the issue becomes determining the kinds of impressions one wishes to construct and determining how to go about constructing said impressions. Leary and Kowalski (1990) identified a number of variables influencing the manner in which people manage their impressions. These variables are subsumed by five primary factors, which are self-concept, desired identity, role constraints, target values, and current or potential social image. The first two factors involve intrapersonal variables whereas the final three involve interpersonal determinants (Leary & Kowalski, 1990).

1. Self-concept

The self-concept is a primary determinant of the impressions people try to project. The self-concept is operated by three different processes, whereof the first is related to the aspects that people value about themselves, and that they wish to proudly display to others. This involves attempts to put the best parts of oneself into public view, simultaneously with ensuring that people accurately perceive them. Though this may seem paradoxical, Leary and Kowalski (1990) argue that people often employ conscious effort to ensure that people hold a hold a veridical view of oneself, they do so to insure consistency between their own claimed image and the perception of others (Leary & Kowalski, 1990).

Secondly, self-beliefs constrain self-presentation by ensuring that information provided is consistent with impressions that can successfully foster desired impressions. In other words, people rarely claim images that are inconsistent with how they see themselves, due to the risk that they cannot live up to their own self-presentation. Though people allow themselves some leeway in how discrepant their behaviours may be from their self-concepts before labelling them as deceitful, the self-concept provides a guide to the reasonableness of trying to create certain impressions. Only when they are unlikely to be found out, people may try to present themselves more positively than what is consistent with their self-beliefs (Leary & Kowalski, 1990). Pretence is also more likely for individuals in highly visible occupations or situational contexts and occurs more often in superficial relationships; "as a relationship deepens, it becomes increasingly difficult – and, perhaps, decreasingly necessary – to maintain the deception" (Leary & Kowalski, 1990, 40).

Finally, internalised ethics against lying influence people's self-concept and often deter them from making claims about themselves that are vastly discrepant with their self-concept (Leary, 2001).

2. Desired identity

People's self-presentational efforts are not only affected by how they think they are, but also by how they would like to be. A persons desired identity image refers to what a person "would *like to be* and thinks he or she *really can be,* at least at his or her best" (Schlenker, 1985, 74, as cited in Leary & Kowalski, 1990, 40). Hence, people tend to manage their impressions in such ways that are biased towards their desired identity images (Leary, 2001), for example by publicly claiming attributes

consistent with their desired identity as part of a self-symbolising processes (Leary & Kowalski, 1990).

Conversely, people tend to steer away from presenting images consistent with their undesired identities (Leary & Kowalski, 1990), namely the things that the individual does not want to be, for example by openly rejecting identities that they do not want to be associated with.

3. *Role constraints*

Social roles carry expectations as to how one who occupies such a role should conform to its norms, and people generally want to convey impressions consistent with their roles and norms (Leary, 2001). People try to ensure that the impressions they convey are consistent with their roles, as a failure to do so often leads to perceptions of diminished effectiveness in that role and loss of rights to enact said role (Leary & Kowalski, 1990). The social norms bound to one's role also prescribe how people should appear in particular social contexts, hence people try to ensure that their public image is consistent with the self-presentational requirements of the social situation through a prototype-matching process, where people try to make their social images conform to prototypic characteristics of the role they are playing (ibid).

Goffman also speaks to the role-governed nature of self-presentation, by observing that certain roles require people to maintain certain 'faces' before particular targets, yet, when the target is no longer present, the person "can relax; he can drop his front, forgo speaking his lines, and step out of character" (Goffman, 1959, 112).

4. *Target values*

People often tend to tailor their self-presentations to the values and preferences of others whose perceptions are of concern. Though people may sometimes fabricate identities or attributes they believe to be consistent with the values of others, they more commonly engage in selectively presenting truthful aspects of their identities that align with the values of their target, and, in turn, withhold information and aspects they deem inconsistent with these values. This means that impression management, in this context, is tactical but not deceitful (Leary & Kowalski, 1990).

However, people may occasionally present themselves negatively, if they perceive those powerful targets to value negative attributes or to be threatened by a positive self-presentation (Leary & Kowalski, 1990).

Conversely, people sometimes choose to actively present themselves in ways that are inconsistent with the target's values, such as in cases where they want to alienate or avoid another person or maintain their sense of autonomy (Leary & Kowalski, 1990).

5. *Current or potential social image*

Finally, people's self-presentational efforts and public image choices are influenced by how they think they are perceived by others, either now or in the future. Self-presentational behaviours will often be aimed at dispelling undesired impressions that others hold about the individual, either due to a current/recent undesirable impression, or as an attempt to amend an undesirable impression the individual fears others will develop in the future. People will then engage in self-presentational behaviour to refute the negative impressions by showing they are different from what others believe them to be (Leary, 2001; Leary & Kowalski, 1990). In cases where refutation of the undesirable impression in not possible, people will instead compensate by projecting particular desired impressions on other dimensions unrelated to the failure (Leary, 2001).

Sometimes, undesirable information that others either have or are like to get about the individual may constrains the individual's subsequent attempts at impression management.
Such constraints may either be 1) *restraining*, thereby preventing certain impression management strategies as people are reluctant to present themselves in ways inconsistent with the information others have, by way of perceiving themselves as having a low probability of creating an alternative impression, or 2) *compelling*, thereby requiring certain impression management strategies designed to counter or repair the damaged image, such as face-saving strategies or compensatory impression management (Leary & Kowalski, 1990).

Social Comparison Theory

Social comparison theory was developed by psychologist Leon Festinger in his 1954 work *A Theory of Social Comparison Process* and concerns the idea of people determining their own personal and social worth through comparison with others. This social comparison process stems from an inherent drive to accurately determine one's own abilities and opinions, and thereby leads to behaviours that will lead the individual toward obtaining an accurate appraisal of these (Festinger, 1954). In most instances, whether an opinion or evaluation of an ability is correct cannot be immediately determined by reference to the physical world. Hence, for both opinions and abilities, in cases where objective physical bases for evaluation are not available, individuals' subjective judgements of correct or incorrect opinion and subjectively accurate assessments of their opinions and abilities depend on comparison with other persons (Festinger, 1954). People do, however, not compare their abilities and opinions with others whose abilities and opinions are too divergent from their own. The comparison is thereby always directed towards people who are somewhat close to the individual, either in abilities or opinions, as they are the direct measurement basis for accurate evaluation of oneself. Hence, the major factor governing the selectivity is simply the discrepancy between the person's own opinion or ability and that of another person (Festinger & Zukier, 1989).

One of the cornerstones of Festinger's work is the comparison of abilities, wherein it is argued that individuals generally prefer to compare with others who are thought to be slightly better off. This notion is referred to as "upward drive" or "upward comparison" (Buunk & Gibbons, 2007). Subsequent research within the field has suggested that a number of factors play into the strength of this upward drive. For example, research has shown that the tendency to engage in upward comparison is stronger when the comparison can be made privately, than when actual contact with the comparison other is anticipated (ibid). Also, survey studies have found that when social comparison does not require individuals to reveal their own inferiorities to the other, nor the risk of the other looking down on them, comparison preferences are more upward than when one has to affiliate with the other (Buunk, 1995, in Buunk & Gibbons, 2007). Moreover, studies have shown that the upward drive is only found when the motive of self-improvement is present in individuals engaging in upward social comparison (Buunk & Gibbons, 2007).

In opposition to upward comparison is the notion of downward comparison, which emerged through the development in the evolution of social comparison theory. Downward comparison occurs when individuals who are threatened on a particular dimension prefer to socially compare with others who are thought to be worse off on this dimension (Hakmiller, 1966, in Buunk & Gibbons, 2007). It has been suggested by Brickman and Bulman (1977) that comparison with others who are thought to be doing better may be threatening, and that such comparisons are thereby often avoided by those feeling inferior and/or threatened. Hence, comparison with those who are thought to be worse off may often be sought to avoid feelings of inferiority (Buunk & Gibbons, 2007).

Methodology

Interpretivism and abduction

This study takes an interpretivist scientific approach. Interpretivism is both an ontological and epistemological assumption used especially within the study of social phenomena, as this requires an understanding of the social world that people inhabit, which they have already interpreted by the meanings they produce and reproduce as a necessary part of their everyday activities together (Lewis-Beck et al., 2004b). From an ontological stance, interpretive researchers perceive reality as consisting of people's subjective experiences of the external, social world, thus making reality socially constructed and intersubjectivist (Antwi & Hamza, 2015). Hence, the route to knowledge does not require a single correct route nor method, as knowledge can be reached and understood through many means. As a result, interpretivist researchers do not have a perception of there being any 'correct' or 'incorrect' theories, rather that theories may serve as a tool in the in-depth examination of social phenomena of interest (Antwi & Hamza, 2015).

Interpretivism developed through critique of the positivist paradigm and considers that human beings and their social world cannot be explored in a similar way to physical phenomena, as they create further depth in meanings (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). Research within social sciences require this distinction and should therefore be differentiated from natural sciences research (ibid). Interpretivist research does not attempt to provide definite, universal laws that can be generalised and applied to everyone, as is often the case within the positivist paradigm. Rather, interpretivist researchers believe

that rich insights into humanity are lost if such complexity is reduced entirely to a series of law-like generalisations. Hence, interpretivist research seeks to create new, richer understandings and interpretations of the social world and contexts (M. Saunders et al., 2019). This does, however, not mean that interpretive researchers do not believe that human behaviour may be patterned and regular; they simply view such patterns as being created out of evolving meaning systems that people generate as they socially interact (Neuman, 2003, in Antwi & Hamza, 2015).

Moreover, interpretivism is explicitly subjectivist, as foci is on complexity, richness, multiple interpretations and meaning-making, which entails that the interpretivist researcher's own values and beliefs play a role in the interpretation of research materials and data. This does, however, impose responsibility on the part of the interpretivist researcher, as the researcher must adopt an empathetic stance towards the research subject(s) and enter the social world of the research participants and understand that world from their point of view (M. Saunders et al., 2019).

Interpretivist research is inherently qualitative in nature, and reality is accessed only through social constructions such as language, symbols, consciousness, and shared meanings. Once reality is accessed, it must be observed and interpreted (Aikenhead, 1997, in Antwi & Hamza, 2015). Observation occurs through information collection about a phenomenon, and interpretations occurs through subsequent meaning-making of the information by drawing inferences or by judging the match between the information and some abstract pattern (Antwi & Hamza, 2015). This process-based meaning-making is coherent with the abductive approach, which is the logic used to construct descriptions and explanations grounded in the activities of social actors, as well as in the language and meaning used by these (Lewis-Beck et al., 2004a). It refers to the process moving from social actors' descriptions of their way of life to a more technical, scientific description of that social life, and involves two stages: 1) describing these activities and meanings, and 2) deriving categories and concept from these, that can form the basis for an understanding or an explanation of the problem/phenomenon at hand (ibid). Abduction is thereby closely associated with interpretivism, as it follows the same principles of alternation between observation and theory, which allows for immersive interpretation.

The abductive approach moves back and forth between theory and data, and effectively combines both the deductive and inductive approach (M. Saunders et al., 2019). Abduction is about discovering

new concepts, ideas, and explanations by finding surprising phenomena, data, or events that cannot be explained by pre-existing knowledge (Kennedy & Thornberg, 2017). When applying an abductive approach to qualitative research, researchers use a selective and creative process to examine how data supports existing theories or hypotheses as well as how the data may call for modification to existing understandings (Thornberg, 2012, in Kennedy & Thornberg, 2017). The abductive approach goes beyond data and pre-existing theoretical knowledge, by modifying elaborating upon, or rejecting theory, or by putting old ideas together in new ways to examine, understand, and explain the data (ibid). This is done by moving back and forth between the data and theories and making comparisons and interpretations in the search for patterns and the best possible explanation to the phenomenon at hand (Kennedy & Thornberg, 2017).

Mixed Methods Research

This study will apply a mixed methods research approach, through the combination of both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. Mixed methods research is, in its essence, the practice of intentional integration of quantitative and qualitative research approaches to best address and understand a research problem (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016a). The main rationale for using mixed methods research is that different methods have different strengths and weaknesses, and they can be effectively combined to take advantage of these differences. As stated by Creswell, "when researchers study a few individuals qualitatively, the ability to generalise the results to many is lost. When researchers quantitatively examine many individuals, the understanding of any one individual is diminished" (Creswell, 2013, 8). Hence, the thoughtful combination of these methods will help obtaining and integrating different results that compensate for each other and jointly provide a better understanding of the research problem (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016b), as researchers are enabled to use all available tools of data collection, rather than being confined to the types of data collection solely associated with either quantitative or qualitative research (Creswell, 2013). A mixed methods approach does present challenges in terms of required researcher skills, where the researcher must be able to understand complexities of both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. Moreover, a mixed methods approach often requires extensive time, resources, and effort on the part of the researcher, due to the increased demands associated with mixed methods designs (ibid). However, if these challenges can be managed by the researcher, a mixed methods approach is

advantageous for answering research questions that cannot be answered by a single approach and provides more nuanced evidence for studying a research problem (Creswell, 2013).

In the case of this study, applying a mixed methods approach allows for both determining the extent to which young Danish women display their touristic experiences on Instagram through a quantitative data collection and analysis of Instagram content, as well as for exploring whether such online displays of touristic experiences serve as a tool for impression management through qualitative data collection and interpretive analysis. Moreover, results from the quantitative analysis will be integrated in the qualitative data collection process. This is done in order to explore behavioural tendencies identified through the quantitative analysis, which cannot be explained without individual accounts, but that would possibly have been unobserved through qualitative data collection alone.

The quantitative analysis will be a brief analysis of the content of 229 Instagram profiles of young, Danish women. This will serve to assess what proportion of their personal UGC on Instagram displays touristic experiences, and the frequency relation between these posts and those not displaying touristic experiences. This quantitative analysis will serve to inform the extent to which displays of touristic experiences are present on young women's Instagram profiles. The qualitative analysis will be partly based on the results of the quantitative analysis. The data for this analysis will consist of 7 semi-structured interviews with participants within the sample group and will serve to gain an understanding of these individuals reasonings for posting UGC content displaying touristic experiences. This analysis in particular will explore themes related to impression management, to uncover the role of displaying touristic experiences on Instagram in efforts to strategically control self-presentation.

Applying a mixed methods approach to this study will thereby help uncovering both the *what* and the *why* of the phenomenon; the quantitative analysis will determine the scope of the phenomenon and practically determine the validity of the problem, whereas the qualitative analysis will uncover the reasoning behind the behaviours uncovered in the quantitative analysis.

Data collection

As mentioned, the aim of this study is to explore young women's reasonings for sharing travel-related UGC on Instagram, and what role impression management plays in this behaviour. The reasoning behind using young women as the subjects of this study is threefold; firstly, some studies, including the 2016 study by Lyu on Korean women's travel selfie behaviours, have argued that women are more likely to treat their appearance as objects that are evaluated by others' perspectives and that women continually adopt others' gaze on their physical selves for successful socialisation. If this is the case, one could implicitly argue that women would be more likely to engage in strategic impression management, especially if successful socialisation is reliant upon it. Secondly, as argued by Lo and McKercher (2015), the younger generation seems to be more proactive in managing impressions through sharing photographs online. In addition to this, one could argue that digital natives who are familiar with digital technology such as SoMe as a result of having grown up with them (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.) are more likely to share travel-related UGC on SoMe in their impression management efforts than other demographics who are less native to the use of SoMe. Finally, photos and videos on SoMe have been found to influence women's activity- and travel-decisions more often than men (Karatsoli & Nathanail, 2020), and young women aged 18-35 represent the largest proportion of Instagram users in Denmark (NapoleonCat, 2022).

Instagram was the SoMe platform chosen for this study. As presented in the literature review, much of the research previously conducted on the behaviours of people producing travel-related UGC on SoMe has largely focussed on TripAdvisor and Facebook. As argued earlier, TripAdvisor's main use-purpose is the sharing and consumption of travel related information, hence, naturally, all UGC shared on this site is displays travel experiences and behaviours. This study aims to investigate whether the sharing of travel-related UGC on SoMe is part of young women's overall impression management efforts, and as TripAdvisor is solely focussed on travel-related UGC, this platform would not provide a nuanced picture of the phenomenon. Another possible SoMe platform to consider was Facebook, which has also previously been extensively researched within the field. Facebook was, however, not chosen due to two main reasons. Firstly, Facebook has experienced a steep decline in young users, both in terms of engagement, active users, and new users – for example, a survey from Piper Sandler found that Facebook usage among U.S. teens and young adults had dropped from 60% using it at least once a month in 2016 to only 27% by 2021 (Leonhardt, 2021), making it less useful in a study

directed specifically at the behaviours of young women. Secondly, as mentioned in relation to the study by Gössling and Stavrinidi (2016), Facebook serves as a mediator for showcasing one's mobility, by encouraging users to disclose such information through leading questions. Facebook thereby encourages behaviours of sharing travel-related UGC, which, in itself, could serve as part of the explanation behind these behaviours. As this study investigates the reasonings for sharing such content in relation to impression management, a SoMe platform with restricted "nudging" functionality, such as Instagram, is preferred as this will limit external factors that may impact sharing motivations.

Instagram has a large share of young users; as of January 2022, 61.6% of global Instagram users were aged between 18-34 (We Are Social et al., 2022a). Moreover, by 2020, 56% of Danish women were reported to use Instagram, compared to 29% of Danish men (AudienceProject, 2020). Hence, Instagram is the most popular SoMe platform among Danish women, second only to Facebook (ibid), which, as has been established, is declining in popularity among a younger demographic.

Instagram is the world's fourth largest SoMe platform, with 1.478 billion monthly active users worldwide (We Are Social et al., 2022b). The platform was bought by Facebook in 2012 for US$ 1 billion, allegedly as an effort to combat rivals Twitter and Google+ and boost its mobile-first strategy (Rodriguez, 2019). Instagram allows its users to communicate mainly through visual means, as it has tailored its services to users of a younger generation who tend to communicate through visualised material, take photos more, and text less, and who want to instantly share these visual contents with their SoMe friends (Hou & Shiau, 2020). Users have the option to post photos or short videos as grid post, carousel posts, stories, Reels, and IGTV videos. Carousel posts are multi-photo posts wherein users may post up to 10 photos/videos in one single post, and Reels are short-format videos consisting of one or several videoclips which can be paired with audio. Each user has their own profile showcasing a profile picture, a short description box, a chronological grid of their posts, number of followers (and who), numbers of profiles followed (and who), tagged photos, story-highlights, and Reels. Instagram offers editing options such as filters and effects, allowing users to enhance or alter the aesthetic appeal of their shared photos or videos before posting them to their followers. Users also have the options to add caption text to their photos, tagging other users, and adding location geotags to their photos before posting. As with many other SoMe platforms, the popularity of posts can be measured through "likes" and comments, however, as of 2021 Instagram offers their users the option

to hide the number of likes received on a post in order to "depressurise people's experience" by reducing social media pressure (Criddle, 2021). Moreover, users may control their profile displays by adding stories to fixed "highlights", deleting or archiving post so they are no longer visible on the grid display, deleting individual photos or videos from carousel posts, editing captions, disabling or hiding comments and/or likes, and by setting their profile to be either private (content only visible to followers approved by the user) or public (content visible to all Instagram users).

The sample group chosen for this study consists of young, Danish women between the ages 20-30, with active Instagram accounts. As this study employs a mixed methods research approach, the empirical data consists of two separate datasets: one for the quantitative analysis and one for the qualitative analysis. The empirical data for the quantitative analysis consists of 229 Instagram profiles of users within the defined sample group, while the empirical data for the qualitative analysis consists of 10 semi-structured interviews with participants within the sample group. The inclusion criteria necessary to be included in the samples for both datasets were that users/interview participants were Danish women between 20-30 years old with active Instagram accounts. Exclusion criteria were that users/participants could not be using their Instagram profiles in any professional capacity, i.e., influencing, as this would influence the motivations for sharing content on Instagram, thereby compromising the results.

Probability sampling of quantitative data

Determining the sample size for the quantitative analysis requires probability sampling, as the purpose of the quantitative analysis is to estimate population parameters, which requires the use of statistical formulas based on probability theories for calculating the confidence of intervals for these estimates (Daniel, 2012). The confidence level describes the level of confidence that the population figure is within the confidence interval around the estimate. In order to determine the necessary sample size, the major study variables must first be identified, and it should be determined whether these are categorical or continuous (ibid). In the case of this study, the data is categorial, meaning that characteristics of the sample are seen as representative of the overall population. This means that information can be inferred about the overall sample population through the study of a finite number of individuals from the overall population. The variables relevant to calculating the sample size are population proportion ($\hat{p}$), confidence interval (ε), and confidence level (z).

The equation required for calculating the minimum sample size necessary to meet the statistical constraints is:

$$n = \frac{z^2 * (\hat{p})(q)}{\varepsilon^2}$$

Population proportion ($\hat{p}$) refers to the estimated proportion in the population relevant to the research (Daniel, 2012). This is used to distinguish $\hat{p}$, the population of individuals where some proportion of the population is distinguishable from the overall population size, ($q = 1$-$\hat{p}$), in some way. In the case of this study, the population proportion refers to all Danish women aged 20-30 using Instagram. Statistics from March 2022 show that there are 2,953,700 Instagram users in Denmark, accounting for 50.4% of Denmark's entire population. 57% (1,683,400) of these were women, with women aged 18-24 accounting for 12% (353,100) and women aged 25-34 accounting for 13.9% (409,800) (NapoleonCat, 2022). Though the entire demographic population group who make up the largest share of Instagram users are aged 18-34, narrowing the group to those aged 20-30 may ensure the most consistent results and clearer data patterns, as life-cycle fluctuations can be limited by narrowing the demographic sample. Not accounting for differences between population density across age groups, the entire group of Danish women aged 20-30 using Instagram consists of 508,600 people. Hence, as this analysis serves to understand the behaviours of Danish women on Instagram aged 20-30, the population proportion is 508,600. It should also be considered whether the overall population size (q) should consist of all Danish women on Instagram, or only those aged 18-34. I would argue that those aged 20-30 should be seen as part of the overall Danish female Instagram users, and not only as a subgroup of those aged 18-34. Hence, as the overall population size then consists of 1,683,400 people, and the sample population consists of 508,600 people, the population proportion ($\hat{p}$) is 30% (.30) and is distinguishable from the remaining 70% (.70) (q).

The confidence interval, or margin of error (ε), determines the difference one is willing to allow between the mean number of the sample and the mean number of the population, and is expressed in terms of mean numbers – i.e., +/- 5%. The more important the results are to the study, the lower margin of error is tolerated as the precision desired of the study is dependent on the margin of error (Daniel, 2012). However, the margin of error also influences the sample size, meaning the lower the margin of error, the larger the sample size. The tolerated margin of error mainly varies from 3-5%,

depending on the data type (Barlett et al., 2001), and the confidence interval for this data set has been set to 5%, meaning that results may vary by +/- 5%. For this formula, ε is .05.

The confidence level (*z*) determines the desired level of confidence or probability of error and is expressed through a z-score. The most common levels of confidence are 90% (z-score 1.645), 95% (z-score 1.96), or 99% (z-score 2.576) (Daniel, 2012). It is used to measure the certainty regarding how accurately a sample reflects the overall population size within the chosen confidence interval. For example, if the confidence level is 95%, one can be 95% certain that the true figure falls within the margin of error. In the case of this data set, the confidence level is set to 90% (z-score 1.645), which allows for a 90% confidence that the true figure falls within a margin of error of +/- 5%.

The final equation to determine the required sample size, with a 90% (1.645) confidence level, a population proportion of 30% (.30), and a 5% (.05) margin of error looks like this:

$$n = \frac{1.645^2 * (.30)(.70)}{.05^2} = 229$$

This means that, in order to obtain the most statistically sound results from the quantitative analysis, a sample size of 229 Instagram profiles is necessary to draw inferences representative of the overall sample population.

The 229 Instagram profiles were found through my personal Instagram account and consists of both users of whom I have existing knowledge and users that were priorly unknown. Users whom I knew matched the sample inclusion criteria did not have to state their age, nationality or city of residence on their profiles, while users whom I did not know had to give indications to this, either by displaying such information in their profile descriptions or post-captions. If this information was not obtainable through their Instagram profiles, users were either contacted through Direct Message on Instagram or looked up on Facebook on the profile section "About". If users did not respond to such requests or did not display this information on Facebook, they were not included in the sample. Moreover, both private and public profiles were included in the sample. However, to ensure research ethics, usernames have been replaced by aliases ("*U1-229*"), and only content from users who have been extensively informed of how their content is used and of the research purpose, and who have given

their explicit permission to use this content, has been included in the analysis to exemplify the analysis process and findings.

The Instagram data was extracted manually, as API restrictions and terms of use do not allow for third-party crawling, scraping, or caching of content, to ensure user security and privacy (Instagram, n.d.). As profiles were sampled through my personal Instagram account, the profiles of people whom I did not formerly know were demographically similar to my own or to profiles I follow, due to the Instagram algorithm. This means that a slight majority of sampled profiles belong to Danish women aged 25-27 residing in Aalborg or Northern Jutland.

To overcome this issue, I purposely sought profiles from the following/followers lists of sample members who varied from my personal demographic characteristics, in order to acquire variation within the final sample. As reflected in figure 2, 59 profiles, equivalent to 25,8% of the sample, belong the women residing in Aalborg. 145 profiles, equivalent to 63,3% of the sample, belong to sample members residing in Denmark's four largest cities, namely Copenhagen, Aarhus, Aalborg, and Odense. This may be explained by the age-related life conditions of this sample population, where many members are likely students in places of study located in larger cities.
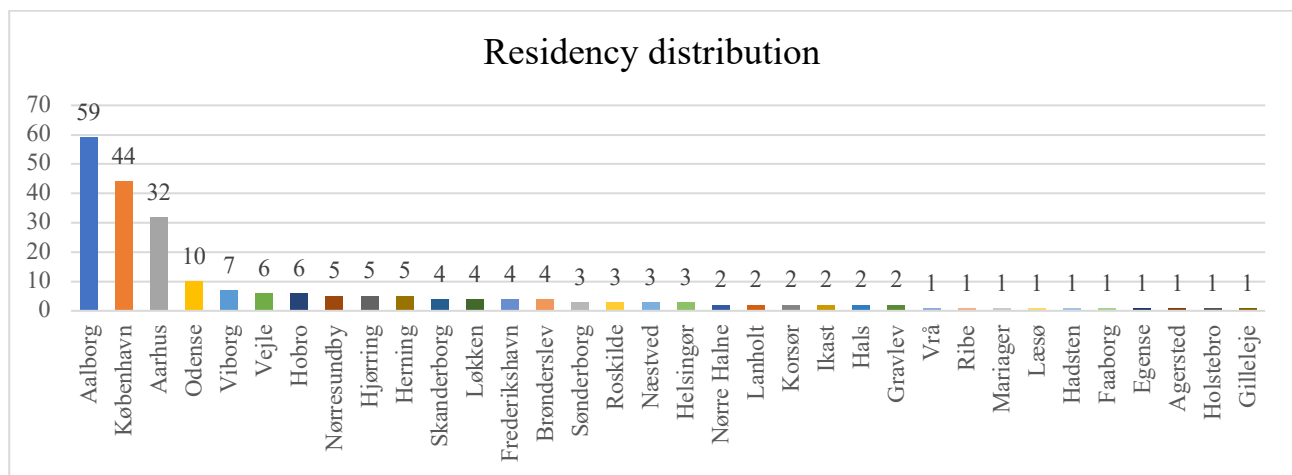

Figure 1 – Residency Distribution

The smallest group of the final sample consisted of women aged 22, comprising 16 profiles, while the largest group consisted of women aged 25, comprising 29 profiles. The final profile distribution by age is reflected in figure 3.
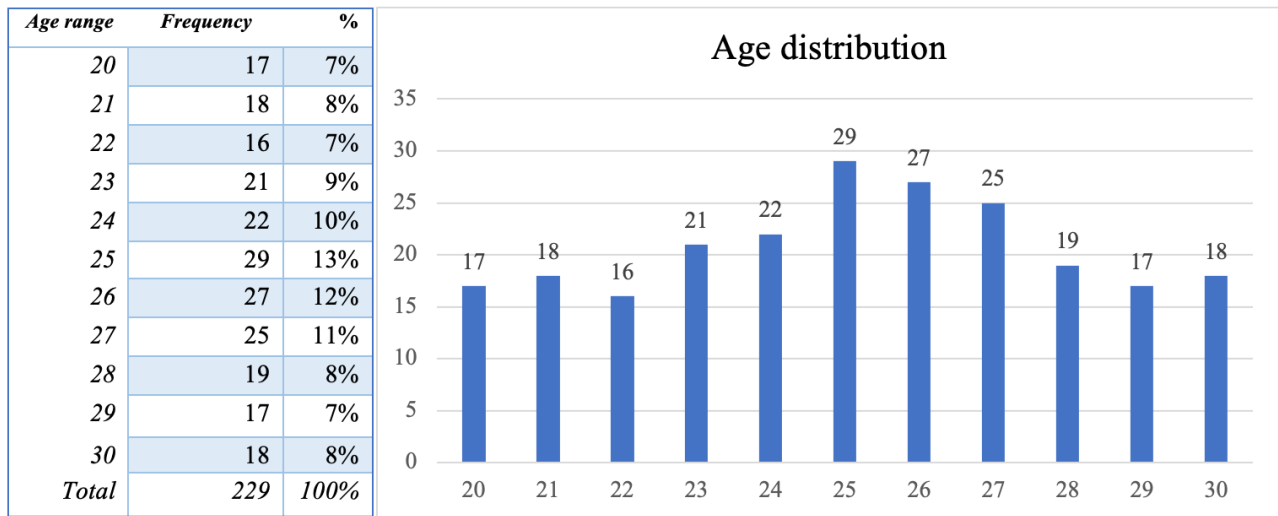
Age range	Frequency	%
20	17	7%
21	18	8%
22	16	7%
23	21	9%
24	22	10%
25	29	13%
26	27	12%
27	25	11%
28	19	8%
29	17	7%
30	18	8%
Total	229	100%

Figure 2 – Age Distribution

The entire dataset of sampled profiles can be seen in appendix.

Purposive sampling of qualitative data

The interview participants for the qualitative analysis were chosen based on purposive sampling, which is a non-probability sampling technique in qualitative inquiry based on deliberately seeking out participants with particular characteristics relevant to the research (Lewis-Beck et al., 2004c). The characteristics necessary to be included in the interview sample, other than the inclusion and exclusion criteria, were that participants had posted travel-related content to their Instagram accounts at least once within the last year, in order to assess whether impression management efforts were involved in this process.

A number of considerations were involved in choosing the adequate number of interview participants for the qualitative analysis. Determining a suitable sample size within non-probability samples has been described as ambiguous, due to the lack of hard and fast rules (Saunders, 2012). In qualitative research, the number considered sufficient generally depends on a balance between the research purpose, the saliency of the obtained data, what is considered numerically credible by the research community, and the epistemological and ontological positions of the researcher (Saunders & Townsend, 2018). It has been argued that saturation is key to good qualitative work, and that data

collection should therefore continue until saturation or information redundancy has been reached (ibid), however, others argue that though the number should not be so small that it becomes difficult to obtain data saturation, it should not be too large to make in-depth analysis difficult (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005, in Saunders & Townsend, 2018). Moreover, Kuzel (1992, in in Saunders & Townsend, 2018) argue that the number required to obtain data saturation is likely to differ depending on whether the target population and the participants to be chosen are considered homogenous or heterogeneous. Saunders (2012) has compiled some guidelines for determining the minimum sample size adequate in relation to the nature of the study, based on existing literature. According to these guidelines, interview studies should have a minimum sample size of 5-25 participants, while studies wherein the sample group is considered homogenous should have a minimum sample size of 4-12 participants (Saunders, 2012).

As the sample group for the qualitative analysis consists of Danish women aged 20-30, with active Instagram accounts whereon they have posted travel-related content within the last year, they are considered as a homogenous group, at least within the scope of the researched topic wherein they have all engaged in the same behaviour. Hence, a sample size of 7 participants for semi-structured interviews may provide a varied, yet saturated view to how impression management efforts influence the sample groups' decisions to post travel-related UGC on Instagram.

Interview participants consisted of friends and acquaintances (known to varying degrees) within the sample criteria, known as acquaintance interviews. There are both advantages and disadvantages to acquaintance interviews: in interpretive, phenomenological research, the researcher aims to capture and interpret people's experiences and the meanings involved (Roiha & Iikkanen, 2022), and both the interviewees' capacity to recount and narrate their life events as well as the interviewer's ability to interpret these accounts influence how these experiences are portrayed (Laine, 2018, in Roiha & Iikkanen, 2022). Having prior relationships with the interview participants thereby gives the advantage of having established a prior rapport with them, a pre-understanding of their life-worlds, and facilitates a natural flow of conversation. Moreover, research by Blichfeldt (2007) shows that, in some cases, informants who had a personal relationship with the interviewer were more relaxed and honest, and that they opened up more than they would, had the interviewer been a stranger. However, acquaintance interviews call for greater attention to the researcher's positionality and research ethics, as interviewing acquaintances may compromise participant's anonymity. Participants must therefore

be sufficiently informed in advance about the research aim and potential consequences of participating (Roiha & Iikkanen, 2022). All interview participants were given the option of being anonymous, and all agreed to be referred to by their first name. Though prior relationships with research participants may inadvertently hamper objectivity, interpretive research does not aim for objectivity. Rather, when conducting interpretive interviews, the goal is to tap into research subjects' interpretations of their own behaviour, which is an intrinsically subjective process, and suggests that interviewing acquaintances might quite possibly increase trustworthiness of the research (Blichfeldt, 2007).

The interview participants comprise the following individuals, and have been classified by their age and characteristics:

1. Petrea
    - 20 years old
    - Lives in Aalborg, student at Aalborg University
    - Travels abroad 1-2 times pr. year, single, shared living accommodations
    - 18 Instagram posts, 11% displaying touristic experiences

2. Emma
    - 21 years old
    - Lives in Aalborg, student at Aalborg University
    - Travels abroad 3-4 times pr. year, single, shared living accommodations
    - 85 Instagram posts, 55% displaying touristic experiences

3. Charlotte
    - 24 years old
    - Lives in Aalborg, student at Aalborg University
    - Travels abroad 2-3 times pr. year, lives with long-term partner
    - 82 Instagram posts, 38% displaying touristic experiences

4. Fie

- o 25 years old

- o Lives in Aalborg, student at Aalborg University

- o Travels abroad 2-3 times pr. year, lives with long-term partner

- o 31 Instagram posts, 45% displaying touristic experiences

5. Louise

   - o 26 years old

   - o Lives in Aalborg, student at Aalborg University

   - o Travels abroad 2-3 times pr. year, lives alone, long-term relationship

   - o 52 Instagram posts, 58% displaying touristic experiences

6. Anne-Katrine

   - o 27 years old

   - o Lives in Aalborg, student at Aalborg University

   - o Travels abroad 2-3 times pr. year, lives alone, single

   - o 90 Instagram posts, 54% displaying touristic experiences

7. Ida

   - o 30 years old

   - o Lives in Mariager, student at Aarhus University

   - o Travels abroad 1-2 times pr. year, lives with husband and two children

   - o 100+ Instagram posts, 13% displaying touristic experiences

Semi-structured interviews

The interview style chosen for the qualitative data collection is that of semi-structured interviews, which is an interview style that falls somewhere in between standardised, mostly closed-ended surveys and free form, open-ended sessions with focus groups (Adams, 2015). Semi-structured interviews are conducted conversationally with one participant at a time and employs a blend of closed- and open-ended questions, accompanied by follow-up questions for elaborations and probes (ibid). The structure of semi-structured interviews requires collaboration between the interviewer and

the participant, and the researcher must be able to understand, interpret, and respond to the information from the participant in order to ensure rich and relevant data for analysis (Given, 2008).

Prior to conducting semi-structured interviews, a written interview guide must be drawn up. An interview guide can vary from either being very specific with carefully worded questions, or being a list of topics to be covered, or to be a combination of both (Given, 2008). The questions and topics of the interview guide are based on the research question and the tentative conceptual model of the phenomenon that underlies the research (ibid). In the case of this study, the interview guide is based on a combination of closed- and open-ended questions related to the motivations for sharing content displaying touristic experiences on Instagram, and the questions are centred around the elements of the two-component model of impression management as well as the topic of social comparison.

Interview participants were first asked to freely speak about their Instagram profiles and their posting behaviours, whereupon questions were centred around the topic of goals, related to the dimensions of goal-values and goal-relevance of impression motivation. Furthermore, questions about participants' perceptions of their audience were asked in relation to both goal-relevance and discrepancy of impression motivation, and in relation to role-constraints, target values, and social image of impression construction. Further questions regarding their behaviours and their perception of both themselves and of the importance of travel/tourism were asked in relation to self-concept and desired identity of impression construction. Participants' perceptions of their own social image, audience, and self-concept were also explored as part of social comparison. Finally, participants were asked behaviours-related questions based on the findings of the quantitative analysis. The interview guide and questions can be seen in the appendix.

The interviews for this study will be conducted in person and tape-recorded for transcription and latter analysis. The interviews will be transcribed using a denaturalised transcription method, which is a transcription method that grows out of the interest in the informational content of speech and dissatisfaction with the empiricism of naturalised transcription work (Oliver et al., 2005). While naturalised transcription attempts full verbatim depictions of speech with as many details as possible in order to understand the social interactions of conversations and oral language intricacies (Nascimento & Steinbruch, 2019), denaturalised transcription has less to do with the intricacies of speech such as depicting accents or involuntary vocalisation, rather it concerns the substance of the

interview (Oliver et al., 2005). While denaturalised transcription also attempts a verbatim depiction of speech, it allows for grammar correction, the removal of the existing noises in the interviews and the standardisation of non-standard speeches and accents to obtain "clean" data free of socio-cultural characteristics and information (Nascimento & Steinbruch, 2019), in order to focus on the substance of the interview, being the meanings and perceptions created and shared during a conversation (Oliver et al., 2005).

As the interviews will be conducted in and transcribed in Danish, only the parts included in the analysis will be translated into English. The full interview transcriptions can be seen in the appendix.

Data analysis

Inferential Statistical Analysis

The quantitative data, consisting of Instagram profiles of 229 Danish women aged 20-30, will be analysed based on inferential statistical analysis. Inferential statistics refers to applying statistical analysis with observed data in order to make inferences to that which cannot be observed (Frey, 2018). An inferential statistic is calculated from the data as a means to inferring more general properties onto a population that go beyond the observable data (ibid). In the case of this analysis, the analysed sample data will be used to inferring general properties onto the entire sample population, meaning that even though only 229 profiles will be analysed, the results from this analysis may be seen as representative of all Danish women aged 20-30 with Instagram accounts. Though inferential statistics often include complex calculations to ensure validity, the main factor ensuring the validity of this analysis is the probability sampling and its characteristics. As shown earlier, the minimum sample necessary to draw inferences representative of the overall population is 229, considering a 90% confidence level and a 5% confidence interval. This means that there is a 90% certainty that the results from the inferential statistical analysis fall within a +/- 5% margin of error. This does thereby mean that the results are not necessarily completely true to the actual properties of the overall population, but that, for the purpose of this study, they will serve to paint a somewhat representative picture of the overall sample population.

The parameters analysed will be the percentage distribution between Instagram posts displaying touristic experiences compared to other posts, as well as the frequency relation between these posts. This will serve to inform to which degree displays of touristic experiences are present on young (aged 20-30) Danish women's Instagram profiles, in a somewhat representative manner, in order to assess the importance of showcasing touristic experiences on Instagram.

As the area of interest is Instagram posts displaying touristic experiences, it is important to first define what touristic experiences are, and how these posts will be identified. The tourist experience holds many meanings and can be defined in several ways. MacCannell (1976) argues that tourism itself consists of the search for authenticity, as living in the modern world produces a state of alienation in which we cannot realize our real selves, and that people thereby travel to escape from the real world in order to experience a different world, and to discover the 'authentic' (as cited in Yamashita, 2015). Boorstin (1962) meanwhile argues that, rather than being a journey in search of authenticity, travel is increasingly based on artificial images, making the tourism experience a 'pseudo-event' (ibid). Cohen (1979) argues instead that there are a number of different modes of tourist experiences ranging from the recreational mode in search of mere pleasure to the existential mode in search of one's real self (ibid). Furthermore, Tung and Ritchie define a tourism experience as "an individual's subjective evaluation and undergoing (i.e. affective, cognitive, and behavioural) of events related to his/her tourist activities which begins before (i.e. planning and preparation), during (i.e. at the destination), and after the trip (i.e. recollection)" (Tung & Ritchie, 2011, 1369), and the World Tourism Organisation define tourism as "a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes" (World Tourism Organization, n.d.).

In essence, defining whether a picture posted to these individuals' Instagram accounts displays a touristic experience is a largely subjective process, as whether an experience is in fact 'touristic' is dependent on the experience-holder's perception of it being so. As it will not be possible to contact all sample members, defining whether the posted content displays touristic experiences relies on my own evaluations. In order to ensure consistency throughout the analysed content, deciding whether something displays a touristic experience will be primarily based on the latter definition of tourism being an activity which entails the movement to countries/places outside people's usual environments. Determining whether a picture displays places outside people's usual environments

requires that the analysed profiles give indications of the sample member's usual environment, either through statements of this in their profile descriptions, captions or pictures indicating their city of residence, or existing knowledge about their usual environments on my part as the researcher. Once this has been established, determining whether the posted content displays movement to other places relies on geotagging, where the location of the posted content is set to somewhere other than their usual environments, caption texts explicitly stating where the content is from, or clear indications of the location being distinct from the usual environments through the visual content (nature, notable buildings, airplanes, flags, etc.). Moreover, the definition by Tung and Ritchie emphasises that the touristic experience is based on a continuous process happening both before, during, and after the trip. Hence, whether the content displaying the touristic experience was in fact posted during the experience itself is not important, as all stages can be defined as part of the touristic experience. Therefore, content related to trip-preparations or post-experience reminiscence will also be included as displaying touristic experiences.

The number of posts on people's Instagram profiles is very varied, and profiles may contain anywhere from only a few to several hundred, potentially thousands, of posts. In order to accommodate time constraints, a limit of 100 analysed posts per profile was imposed. Therefore, if an Instagram user has less than 100 posts to their profiles, all posts will be included in the analysis, but if there are more than 100 posts, only the latest 100 posts shared will be included. Moreover, all content visible on the grid display will be included, whether this is pictures, videos, Reels, or carousel posts. Only visual content from the grid will be included in the analysis, meaning that story-highlights, captions, comments, likes, etc. will not be considered.

Qualitative Content Analysis

The qualitative data, consisting of transcriptions from the semi-structured interviews, will be analysed though a qualitative content analysis (QCA). QCA is a method used for systematically describing the meaning of qualitative data by assigning successive parts of the material to categories of a coding frame (Schreier, 2014). QCA helps in reducing the amount of material by requiring the researcher to focus on selected aspects of meaning that relate to the overall research question; instead of focussing on specifics of the material, it is categorised into categories and subcategories of a coding frame. While this invariably results in the loss of concrete information, it allows for a sense of how different

parts of the material compare and relate to each other (ibid). QCA is also a highly systematic method for analysing data, as it requires examination of every single part of the material in a way that is relevant to the research question. It is a systematic, iterative process that goes back and forth between the material and the coding in an abductive way, that counteracts the dangers of looking at the material only through one's own pre-existing assumptions and expectations (Schreier, 2014). Moreover, QCA typically combines both concept-driven and data-driven categories within the coding frame. A part of the categories should always be data-driven to ensure that the categories match the data and provide a valid description of the data, thereby making it flexible (Schreier, 2014).

Directed Content Analysis

QCA consists of conventional, directed, and summative approaches to analyse qualitative data, and the directed approach, which will be applied to this analysis, is especially useful in cases where existing theory or prior research exists about a phenomenon (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). A directed content analysis is a deductive category application that applies existing theory or research to provide predictions about the variables of interest, or about the relationships among variables, to help determine the initial coding frame and relationships between codes (ibid). However, though the initial coding phase is guided by deductively defined categories, more elements will emerge throughout the analysis of the material, which expands the coding frame through an inductive process. The predefined categories are thereby concept-driven, and the codes that emerge through the data analysis are data-driven.

The predefined categories for the coding frame are guided by the elements of the two-component model of impression management and by the elements of social comparison theory. The elements of impression management are impression motivation, with factors of goal-relevance, goal-value, and image discrepancy, and impression construction, with factors of self-concept, desired identity, role constraints, target values, and current/potential social image, while the elements of social comparison are upward- and downward comparison. The final coding frame, including an elaboration on how each code is identified in the data, can be found in the appendix.

Research Structure

The figure below represents the research structure of this thesis and the interconnections between the empirical data sets, theoretical foundations, and the analyses.
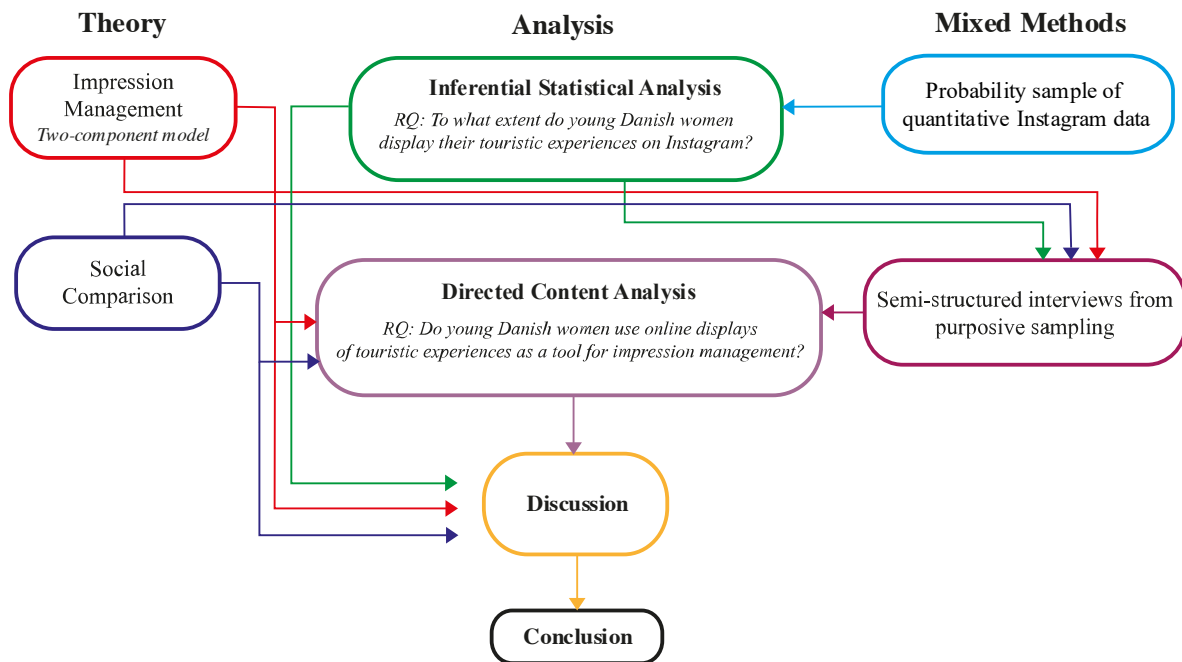

Figure 3 - Research Structure

The inferential statistical analysis is based on empirical data from the probability sampling of quantitative Instagram data and serves to address the first part of the research question, namely the extent to which young Danish women display their touristic experiences on Instagram. Results from this analysis are subsequently incorporated in the data collection process for the semi-structured interviews, in order to connect the observations of behavioural patterns from the inferential statistical analysis to the accounts of individual interview participants. Moreover, the elements of the two-component model of Impression Management guide the semi-structured interviews, while factors related to Social Comparison are addressed throughout the course of the interviews.

The interviews are then coded and analysed based on the elements of the two-component model of Impression Management, factors of social comparison, results derived from the inferential statistical analysis, and subcategories inductively identified through reiterative review of the interview.

Findings are subsequently presented in the directed content analysis, which will serve to address the second part of the research question, namely whether young Danish women use online displays of touristic experiences as a tool for impression management. The second part of the research question is centred around impression management, hence, both factors observed in relation to social comparison, results derived from the inferential statistical analysis and inductively identified subcategories will be discussed relative to the motivations and behaviours of young Danish women displaying touristic experiences on Instagram. Finally, the research question will be answered in the conclusion, based on the outcomes of the analyses.

Analysis

Posting behaviours of young Danish women on Instagram

Posting amount

Results of the data collection can be accessed through this link. Across all 229 profiles, 11039 posts were analysed. The post amount on each profile varies from a minimum of 3 posts pr. profile to a maximum of 100+ posts pr. profile. The post amount on each profile amounts to a mean value of 48 posts pr. profile, while the median value, which can be seen as the middle value in data sets containing skewed distributions, amounts to 46 posts pr. profile, thereby only slightly less than the mean value. The post amount distribution across all profiles is reflected in figure 5.
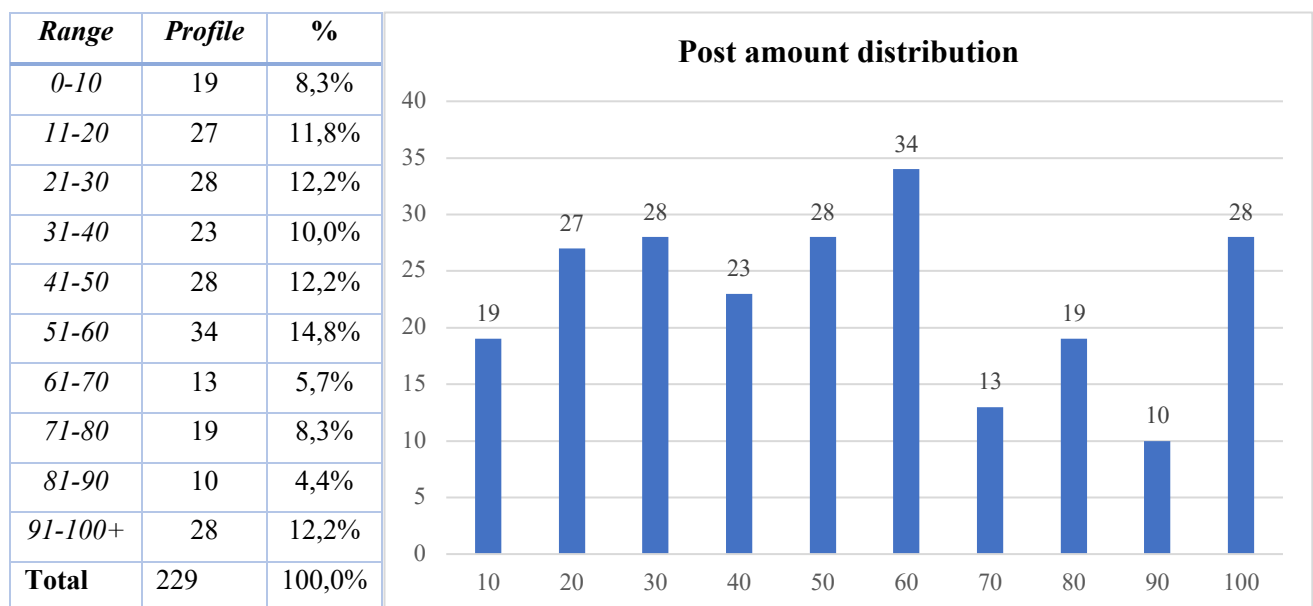
Range	Profile	%
0-10	19	8,3%
11-20	27	11,8%
21-30	28	12,2%
31-40	23	10,0%
41-50	28	12,2%
51-60	34	14,8%
61-70	13	5,7%
71-80	19	8,3%
81-90	10	4,4%
91-100+	28	12,2%
Total	**229**	**100,0%**

Figure 4 – Post Amount

As can be seen in figure 5, the least frequent post amount on a profile falls within a range of 81-90 posts, which is the case for 4,4% of analysed profiles, while the most frequent post amount falls within a range of 51-60 posts, as is the case for 14,8% of analysed profiles.

Posting of touristic experiences

4865 of all analysed posts contained displays of touristic experience, while the remaining 6174 post were classified as non-touristic. The mean value of all touristic posts amounts to 43% of all shared posts on the samples' Instagram profiles, while the median value amounts to 38%, hence slightly lower than the mean value. Figure 6 reflects the frequency distribution of touristic posts across all profiles, sorted by lowest to highest frequency, while figure 7 reflects the same values sorted by most to least frequent distribution.

Distribution	Frequency	%
0-10%	13	5,70%
11-20%	34	14,91%
21-30%	32	14,04%
31-40%	41	17,98%
41-50%	26	11,40%
51-60%	28	12,28%
61-70%	21	9,21%
71-80%	13	5,70%
81-90%	16	7,02%
91-100%	5	1,75%
Total	229	100,00%
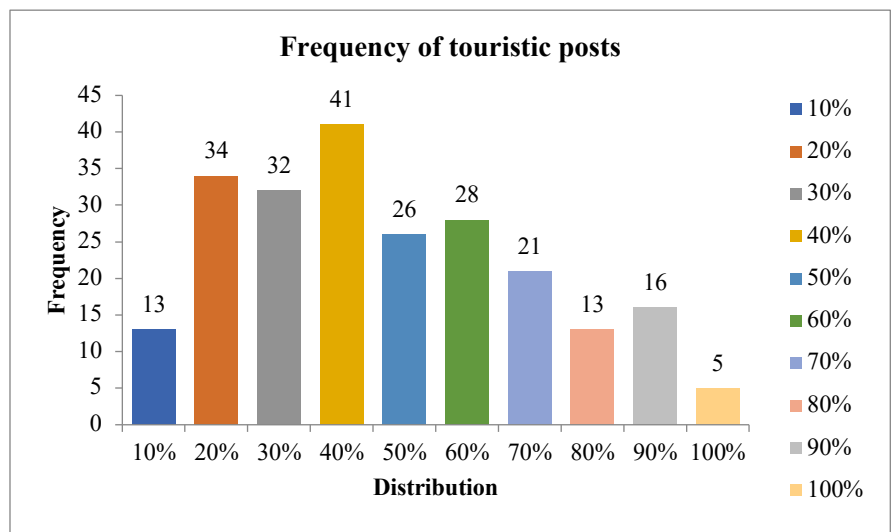
Figure 5 – Frequency of Touristic Experiences (min. – max.)

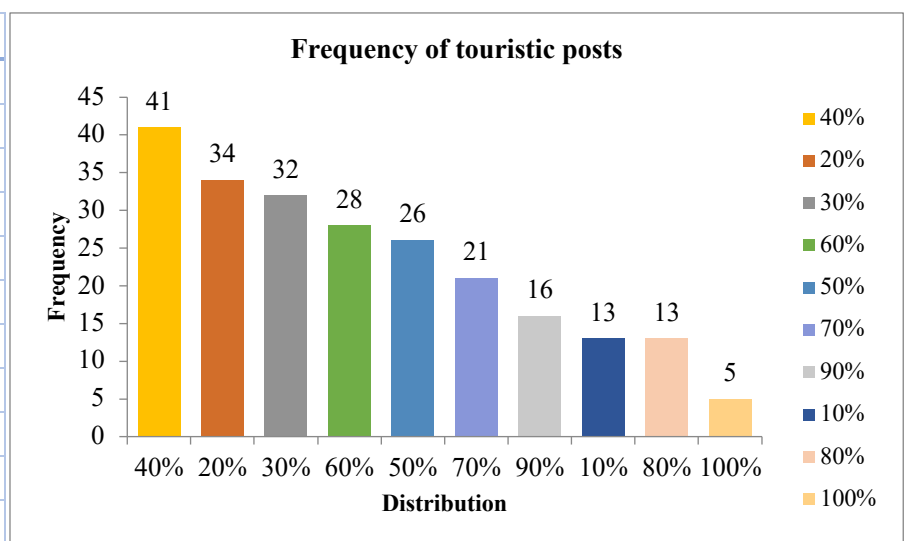| Distribution	Frequency	%
31-40%	41	17,98%
11-20%	34	14,91%
21-30%	32	14,04%
51-60%	28	12,28%
41-50%	26	11,40%
61-70%	21	9,21%
81-90%	16	7,02%
0-10%	13	5,70%
71-80%	13	5,70%
91-100%	5	1,75%
Total	229	100,00%

Figure 6 - Frequency of Touristic Experiences (occurrence distribution)

While the mean and median values amount to 43% and 38% respectively, the most frequent value of proportion of posts displaying touristic experiences falls within a range of 31-40% on 41 of the sampled profiles, equivalent to approx. 18% of the sampled profiles. 5,7% of sampled profiles contained less than 11% of posts displaying touristic experiences, while only one profile, U134, did not contain any. Only 1,75% of profiles contained more than 91% of posts displaying touristic experiences, and with the highest proportion amounting to 93% on the profile of U83. No profiles exclusively contained posts displaying touristic experiences.

The ratio distribution in figure 7 reflects that, on average, for every 1,5 – 2 posts posted to 38% of the sample members Instagram profiles, 1 post contains displays of touristic experiences. The second highest ratio distribution falls between every 2,5 – 3 posts to 23% of sample members Instagram profiles, whereas in only 5% of cases, posts containing displays of touristic experiences occur once or less for every 10,5 or more posted content.

Figure 7 – Ratio Distribution

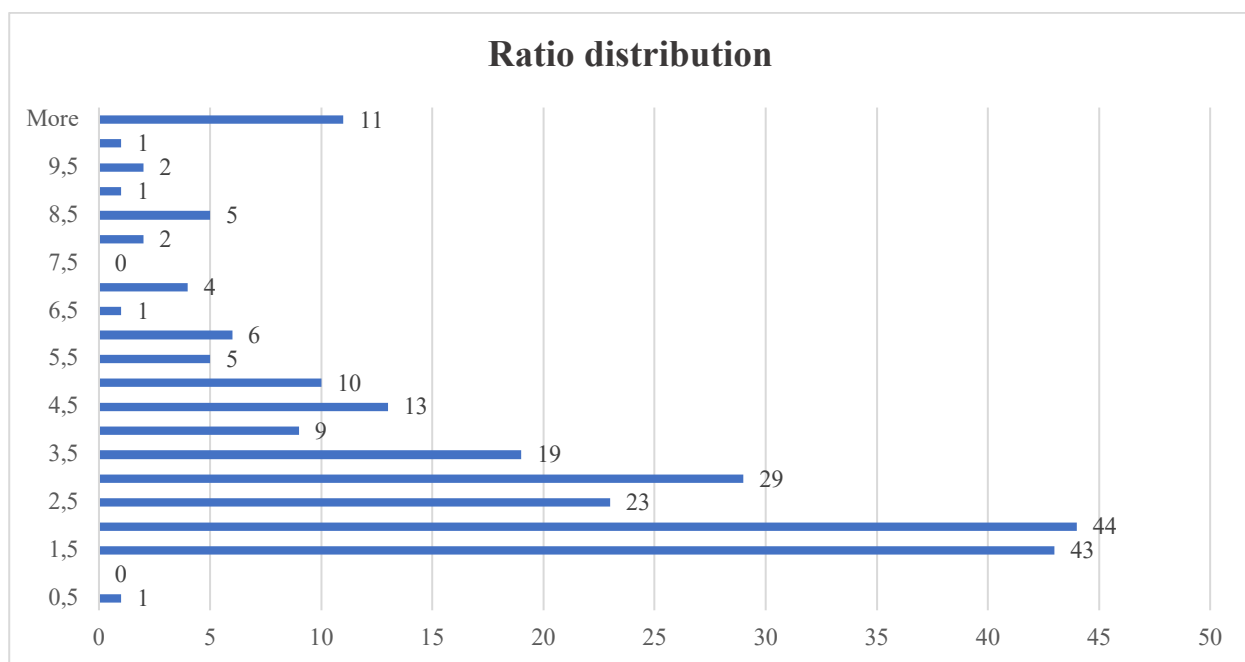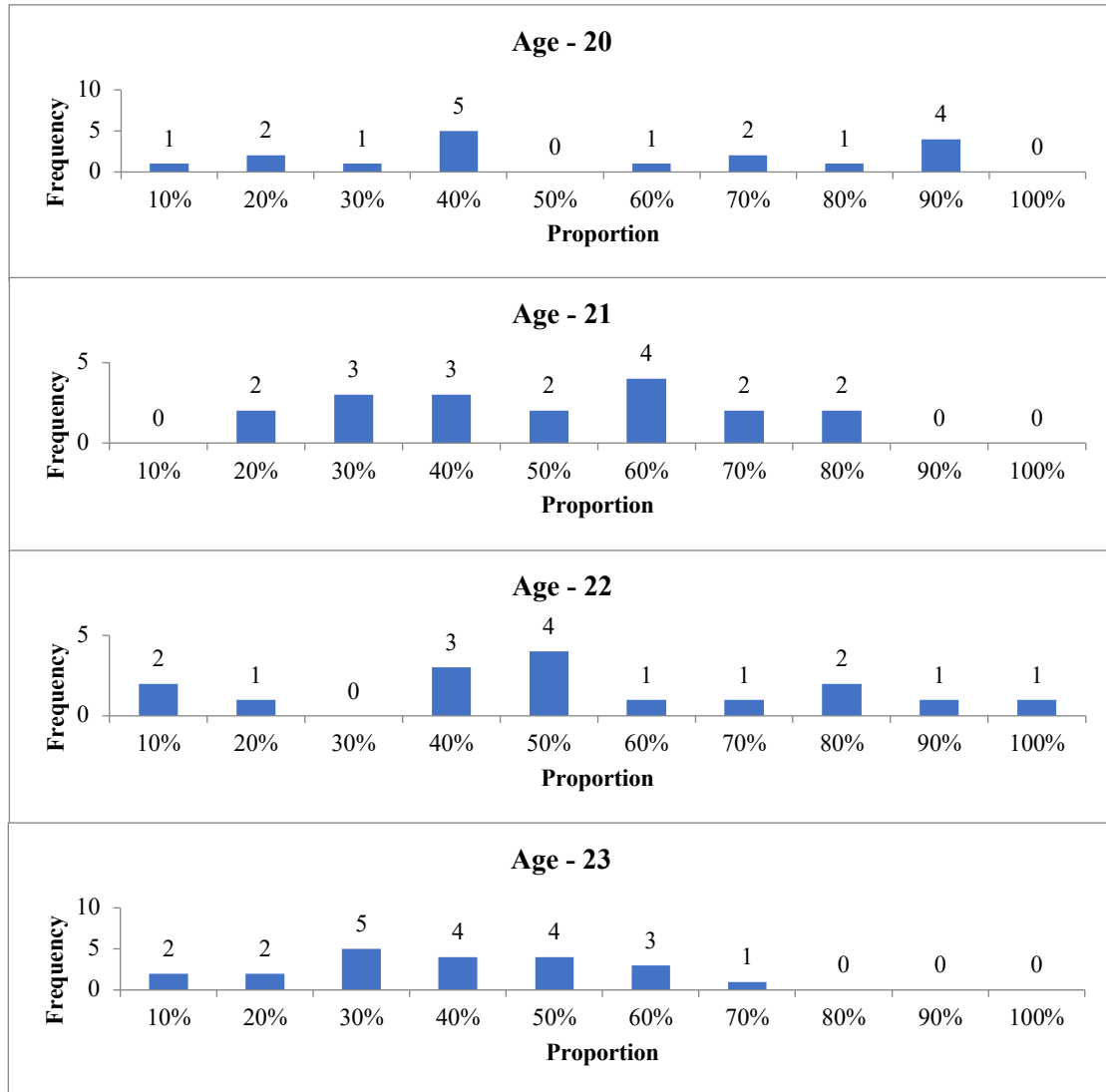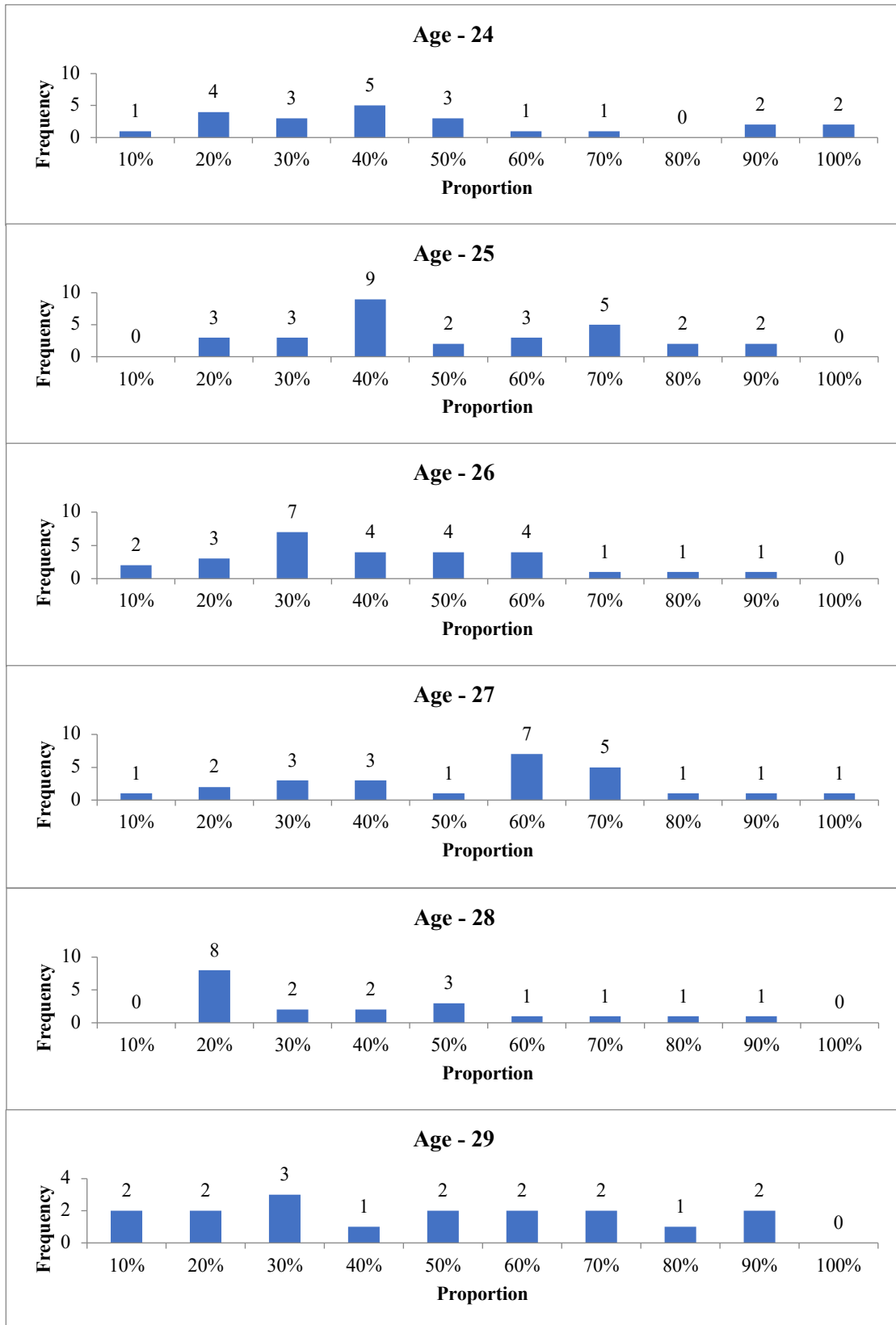## Variations across age groups

In the following, differences across different age groups' behaviours of posting touristic experiences will be presented. As shown in Figure 2 – Age Distribution, sample members aged 25, 26, and 27 comprised a slight majority of analysed profiles (13%, 12%, 11%) compared to sample members of the remaining age groups, who were distributed within a range of 7% - 10%.
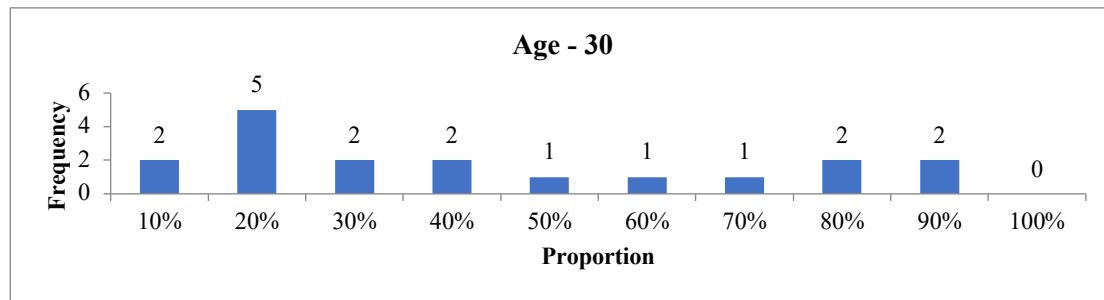
Age - 24

Proportion	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
Frequency	1	4	3	5	3	1	1	0	2	2

Age - 25

Proportion	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
Frequency	0	3	3	9	2	3	5	2	2	0

Age - 26

Proportion	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
Frequency	2	3	7	4	4	4	1	1	1	0

Age - 27

Proportion	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
Frequency	1	2	3	3	1	7	5	1	1	1

Age - 28

Proportion	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
Frequency	0	8	2	2	3	1	1	1	1	0

Age - 29

Proportion	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
Frequency	2	2	3	1	2	2	2	1	2	0

Figure 8 - Touristic proportion across age groups

The biggest deviation in posting behaviour identified across age groups is seen with the sample members aged 28-30. The most common proportion of posts displaying touristic experiences lies within the range of 20% for those sample members aged 28 and 30, with median values of 30% and 27% respectively. Those aged 27 had the highest proportion of posts displaying touristic experiences, with a majority falling within the range of 60% and a median value of 55%. The lesser proportion of posts being touristic for those aged 28 and 30 could be explained by life-cycle conditions affecting posting behaviours and motivations. One could assume that those within these older age groups of the sample are at life stages where children, marriage, house purchasing etc. is more prevalent than for some of the younger sample members, and that such conditions affect their posting behaviours.

Seeing that the probability sampling method was used to determine the appropriate sample size for analysing the broad group of Danish women aged 20-30 on Instagram, and not individual age groups, and as variation between age groups in the final sample exists, the results from the individual age groups may not be representative of the broader population sizes they each fall within, but only of this sample. While results could still be indicative of behavioural patterns of the broader population sizes they fall within, it cannot be ascertained that they fall within a 90% confidence level and +/- 5% confidence interval, as is the case with the rest of the results.

Posting frequency and interval on individual profiles

As determined, the mean value of all touristic posts across the sampled profiles amounts to 43%, and a median value of 38%. Moreover, as shown in Figure 8 – Ratio Distribution, the highest ratio distribution was within 1,5 – 2, with a ratio mean of 4,5 and a ratio median of 2,6. However, during the data collection process, a tendency to post touristic experiences within closer intervals and at higher frequencies than non-touristic posts was detected. This tendency cannot be illustrated acrossall

profiles, as it is dependent on the date stamps determining the posting intervals on individual profiles. As the sampled profiles vary in both post amount and posting time, this tendency will be shown through an extract of profiles from the sample.

The profiles extracted were those of U1, U2, U3, U8, U13, U14, U16, U17, U21, U26, U33, U37, U39, and U41. Five of these will be presented in the following to illustrate the tendency. The remaining profile extracts can be seen .
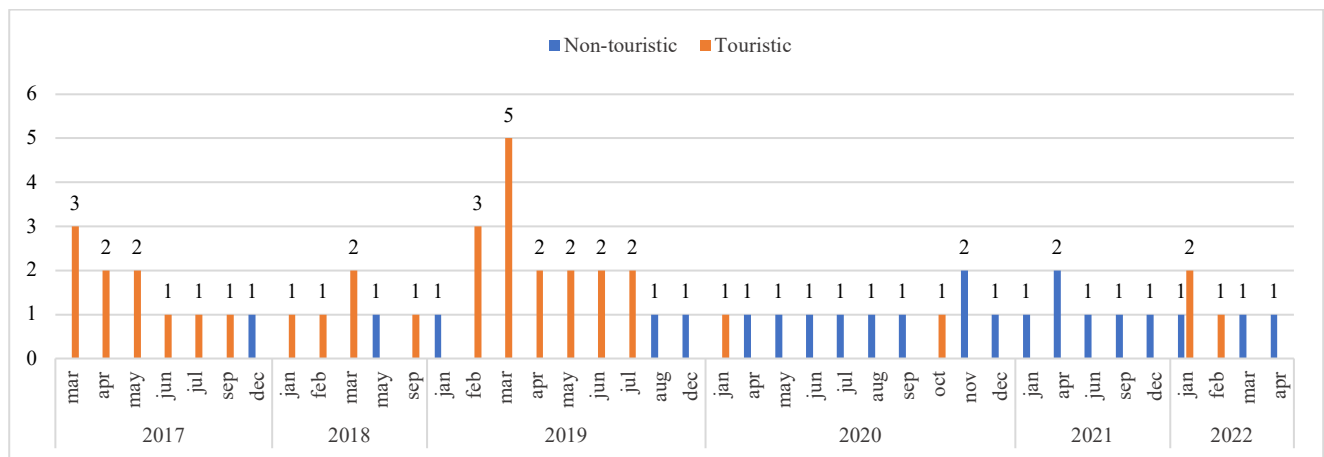

Figure 9 - U1

Figure 9 reflects the profile of U1, a 25-year-old woman living in Aalborg. This user has a total of 59 Instagram posts, whereof 36 (61%) display touristic experiences. During 2017, U1 posted 9 touristic posts during the months of March to July, nothing in August, 1 touristic post in September, and did not post again until two months later, where a non-touristic post was shared in December. In 2018, U1 posted solely touristic content from January to March, posted nothing in April, and one non-touristic post in May. U1 did not share anything until four months later, where a touristic post was shared. In 2019, U1 shared 13 touristic posts from February to July, with 5 of these posted in March 2019 alone. U1 shared one non-touristic post in August 2019 and did not post anything else until four months later, where another non-touristic post was shared in December. U1 posted 36 posts in the years 2017-2019, whereof 31 were touristic. In 2020, U1 shared 11 posts, whereof two were touristic. Of these 11 posts, 6 were shared at an interval of one every month from April to October, two non-touristic posts were shared in November, and one was shared in December. In 2021, no touristic posts were shared, while 6 non-touristic posts were shared at an interval of approx. once every third month. While U1 has shared 6 posts from January to April 2022, 3 of these were touristic and shared during

a span of 19 days. U1 exhibits a behaviour of sharing more content during a narrower span whenever the shared content displays touristic experiences, as opposed to non-touristic content that is shared in fewer quantities at greater intervals.
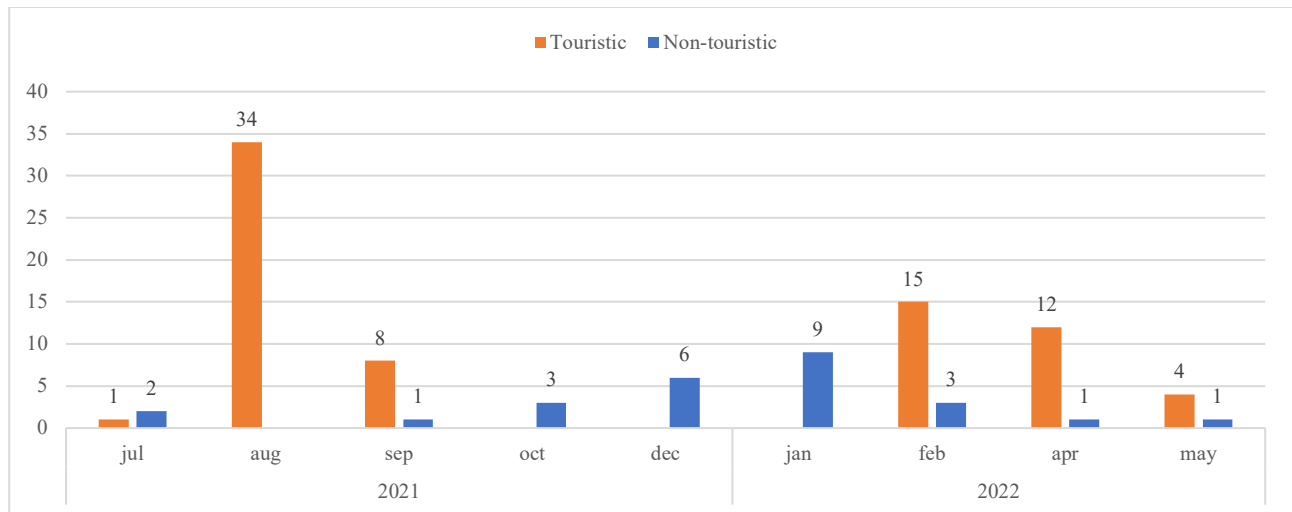

Figure 10 - U21

U21 is a 26-year-old woman living in Copenhagen. U21 has more than 100 posts on her Instagram profile, hence only the last 100 have been included in the analysis. 74 of U21's latest 100 posts are displays of touristic experiences. In 2021, U21 shared 42 touristic posts from August 8th to September 4th, amounting to an average of 1,5 posts shared every day. U21 did not posts again until September 26th, where a non-touristic post was shared. 3 posts were shared approx. one week apart in October 2021, and 6 non-touristic posts were shared in December during a span of five days. 9 non-touristic posts were shared in January 2022, whereof four were shared on the same day. All 15 touristic posts shared in February 2022 were shared during the same week, while the non-touristic posts were shared almost three weeks apart. All touristic posts in April were shared during a span of 13 days, and of the touristic posts in May, three were shared on the same day.

Though U21 arguably both travels a lot, and generally shares many posts to Instagram, it is notable that the touristic posts are shared at far more frequent intervals and in greater quantities than the non-touristic content.
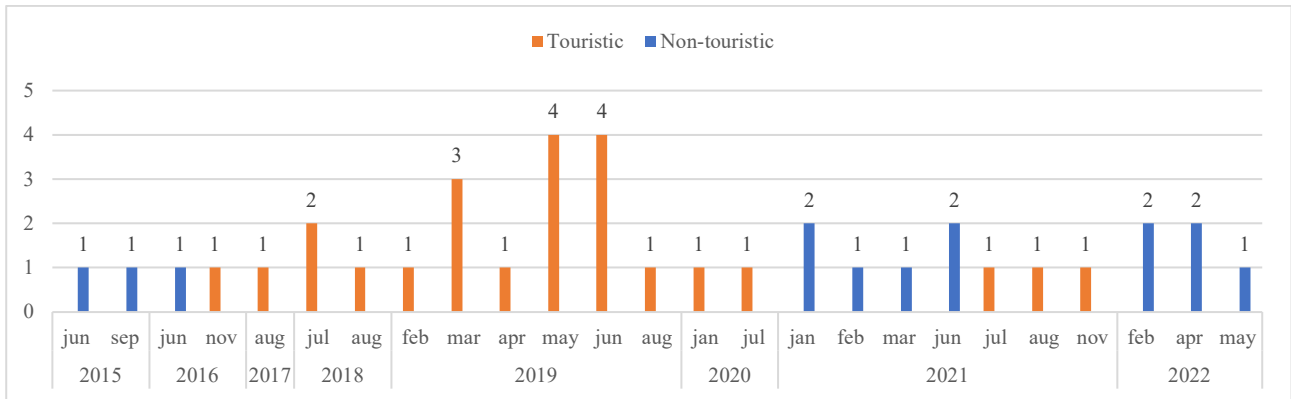
Figure 11 - U13

U13 is 27 years old, lives in Aalborg, and has a total of 38 posts on Instagram, whereof 24 (63%) are displays of touristic experiences. During the years 2017-2020, U13 has only shared touristic content, both in higher quantities and during narrower intervals than the non-touristic posts shared in both the previous and following years.
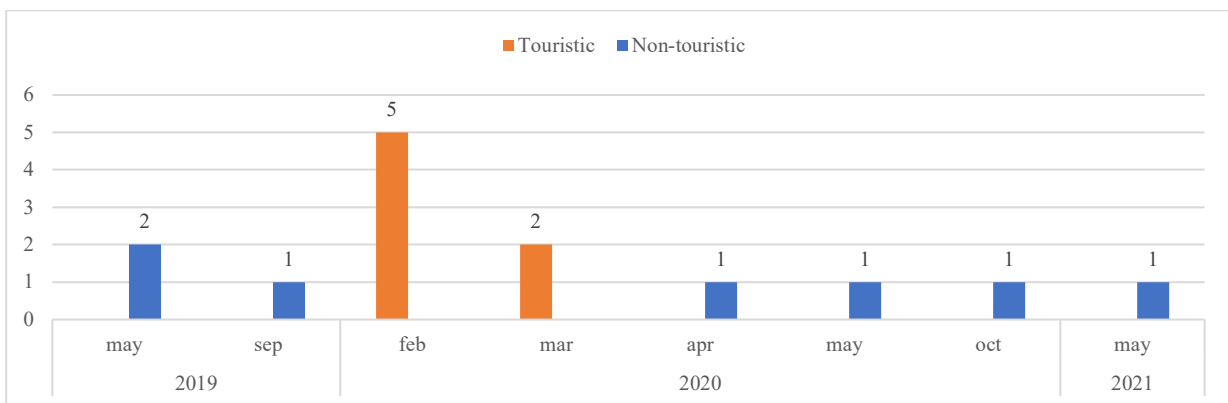

Figure 12 - U16

U16 is 22 years old, lives in Agersted, and has a total of 14 posts on her Instagram profile, whereof half are displays of touristic experiences. Of these, five touristic posts were shared during a 20-day period in February 2020, while the remaining two were shared during a single week in March 2020. The non-touristic posts were shared at much greater intervals, varying from once a month, up to once every seven months.
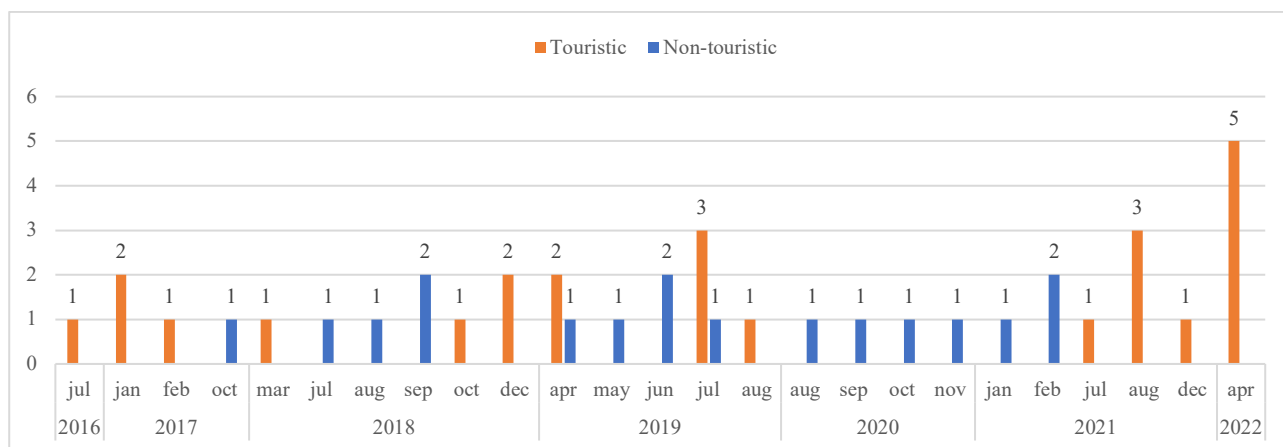
Figure 13 - U43

The final extract reflects the Instagram profile of U43, a 24-year-old woman living in Herning. U43 has a total of 41 posts, whereof 24 (59%) are displays of touristic experiences. The earliest post on this profile is a touristic post from July 2016, and U43 does not post anything else until six months later, where two touristic posts are shared only three days apart in January 2017. In 2018, half of the posts shared are touristic, and both posts from December are shared three days apart. In 2019, the first two touristic posts are shared within a span of 10 days in April, while the following five non-touristic posts are shared approx. three weeks apart. The following three touristic posts in July are shared within the same week. From August 2020 to February 2021, U43 shares approx. one non-touristic post each month, while the touristic posts shared in July and August 2021 are shared within a period of approx. three weeks. Finally, U43 shared 5 touristic posts by an average of every second day during a 10-day span in April 2022.

These profiles are all representative of the same tendency identified in the sample during the data collection process, namely that posts displaying touristic experiences are posted at narrower intervals and in greater quantities than non-touristic posts. While this was especially prevalent for profiles with a high distribution of touristic posts, the same tendency was identified across profiles with a lower distribution of touristic posts.

This tendency cannot be presented by either a mean or median value across the entire sample and it is therefore not possible to ascertain that this is indeed a tendency representative of all Danish women aged 20-30 on Instagram. However, observations such as both this latter tendency, as well as the

identified deviation in posting behaviours of older sample members will be further explored through the quantitative analysis.

Impression Motivations for sharing touristic UGC on Instagram

As previously mentioned, impression motivation is a function of the three interrelated factors of the goal-relevance of impressions, the value of desired outcomes, and the perceived discrepancy between one's desired and current social image, hence, more than one impression motivation factor may pertain to the achievement of goals. Therefore, the following analysis of participants' impression motivations will present both the identified self-presentational goals and impression motivations pertaining to each individual interview participant, rather than being structured around each of the discrete impression management (IM) goals and impression motivation factors.

As all participants have indeed displayed UGC of touristic experiences on Instagram (IG) within the last year, the goal of this analysis is to determine whether this was done in relation to an IM goal, and, if so, to explore the nature of the participants' IM goals and the degree of their motivations antecedent to sharing such UGC. Though focus is primarily on the self-presentational goals and impression motivation factors related to sharing displays of touristic experiences on IG, goals and motivations for sharing 'general' UGC on IG are included as to see whether goals and motivational factors differ depending on the content type.

Impression Motivations – Petrea

IM goals – general UGC: Identity development
IM goals – touristic UGC: Self-esteem maintenance

The impression motivations identified from Petrea's account mainly pertained to the general aspect of sharing UGC on IG. The goal-relevance elements concerned the publicity tied to IG, relevant to the goal of identity development. This was identified through statements such as "I'm a singer and I like documenting my growth on Instagram" (l. 18) and "I'm trying to show some different sides of my personality (…) so it's divided into the 'cultured-travelling-me', the 'basic-girl' me, and the more

church and musical side of my personality." (l. 39-40), thereby motivating her to communicate valuable aspects about her identity, such as personality attributes as singing and being cultured.

The goal-values pertaining to this were related to target characteristics of those either with an interest in her identity development or those who were members of her own social group, as identified through statements such as "I mainly post for people who follow what I'm doing, how I'm developing over time (…)" (l. 109) and "My friends [are who I imagine see my posts] (…) so it's only people whom I know." (l. 90 + 96).

Finally, a single indication of motivations related to image discrepancy was identified as resulting from a discrepancy between her own self-image and the contents of her public IG image, as indicated through "(…) I just went through them [*old Instagram posts*] one by one to see if I wanted to keep any. And then I realised that, no, that's not really the person I feel that I am any more (…)". Hence, this image discrepancy led to strategic IM in the form of editorial changes (archiving/deleting) to her previous IG posts, in order to align her public image with her desired private identity.

The only impression motivations identified for sharing touristic/travel-related UGC on IG concerned the goal-relevance of IG being a platform where one can publicly communicate valuable aspects about oneself, in this case the enjoyment of a trip "it was actually just a really nice day, and it deserved to be documented." (l. 31) and pertained to a goal of self-esteem maintenance through strategically displaying one's location for others to see (l. 88), thereby using the geotagging feature as a tool for IM.

Impression Motivations – Emma

IM goals – general UGC: Social approval, self-esteem maintenance, identity development
IM goals – touristic UGC: Social approval and status, self-esteem maintenance, identity development

The impression motivations identified throughout the interview with Emma related to both motivations for sharing touristic UGC and general UGC to achieve goals of social approval, self-esteem maintenance, and identity development. The goal-relevance elements of sharing both touristic and general UGC on IG mainly concerned the publicity tied to IG, by publicly showcasing both

touristic and non-touristic experiences as a means to be recognised for her true self, as indicated through the statements "I don't know if I want to be seen the travelling type as such, but maybe as the type who experiences things, who dares to do things (…) I think I'd like that." (l. 70-72) and "I'd actually just like them to see me for who I am (…)." (l. 166), both implying goals of identity development.

Moreover, when sharing touristic UGC, goal-relevance also pertained to publicity when related to goals of social approval, status, and self-esteem, as indicated through statements such as 1) "there are many people that I don't speak with in everyday life, who maybe follow me on Instagram. And I just think it's nice showing that 'hey, I'm travelling' or "something cool is happening." (l. 42-43), and 2) "because then you're in some place cool. Like, in Paris, some cool restaurant you've heard about and that you think other people have heard about too, like 'hey, I'm here'." (l. 183-184). Emma could thereby be seen to engage in IM by displaying valuable experiences to her general IG following, wherein geotagging is used as a strategic tool.

Motivations were mostly not related to any specific values of the targets, except for few indications of goal-values of sharing touristic UGC pertaining to 1) wanting to display these experiences to people whom she doesn't regularly interact with (l. 42-43), and 2) receiving self-esteem enhancing feedback about her travel experiences from people whom she does interact with, indicated through the statement "(…) when I've posted something, people have said 'oh, that looks so cool, where are you, what have you travelled through', and people have seemed interested when I've posted [about my travel experiences]." (l. 148). As previously stated, Leary and Kowalski (1990) argue that when people expect future interactions with another person, they are more likely to control how the other perceives them. In this case, expected interactions with people who might comment on her travel experiences after having displayed them on IG could elicit strategic IM through displays of touristic experiences on IG, in the pursuit of social approval and self-esteem enhancement.

Finally, indications of motivations associated with image discrepancy concerned 1) discrepancy between current self-image and former UGC shared to IG (l. 191-193), comparable to Petrea's experience, and 2) a discrepancy between personal values and the experience she had in a zoo: "We were in some kind of zoo where there were a lot of poor animals, and I didn't really like it, so I didn't post anything from there" (l. 89-90). Leary and Kowalski (1990) argued that even failures known

only to the individual can affect impression-relevant behaviour. In this case, she refrained from posting anything from the experience, as to not be publicly associated with something discrepant from her self-image.

Impression Motivations – Charlotte

IM goals – general UGC: Social approval, self-esteem maintenance, identity development
IM goals – touristic UGC: Social approval and status, self-esteem maintenance, identity development

Impression motivations identified through the interview with Charlotte also pertained to achieving goals of identity development, social approval, and self-esteem maintenance. Charlotte's motivations were highly associated with sharing touristic and travel-related UGC on IG, and, as she stated herself: "I almost only post about travelling or my friends" (l. 14), which explains why the identified motivations were biased towards sharing touristic UGC. The goal-relevance elements concerned the publicity of displaying such experiences in order to achieve social approval and self-esteem, as well as to publicly claim an identity as someone who travels. Charlotte stated that: "I'm also very interested in things related to travel and tourism, and I'd like to have a carrier within the tourism industry at some point, maybe as a travel consultant or something, and I also just think it's cool to have a kind of travel-profile (…)" (l. 21-26). Publicly claiming such an identity might also pertain to a future goal of material outcomes, as she expresses a wish for a carrier within the tourism industry, and thereby using her IG profile to assert an identity aligned with such a goal.

The goal-value element related to being dependent on others for the valued outcomes, especially in terms of social approval and self-esteem, as these concerned a desire for others to find her travel experiences valuable and liking posts displaying these experiences, as indicated through "(…) I expect to receive more likes on travel pictures, because I think it's something more special." (l. 37). Especially approval and affirmation from certain friends and followers were stated to be valuable, whereas other 'unimportant' followers' perception mattered less, as seen through the statement "I always expect certain people to like my posts, whereas others are unimportant. (…) I would like the people whom I post for to think that it looks cool." (l. 135).

Finally, elements of image discrepancy were identified as an occasional motivation for IM, in the case where not receiving likes was perceived as a failure, as seen through "if I only received 15 likes on the post from Paris, I would probably delete it. (…) and it actually didn't receive any likes when I initially posted it, which made me delete it (…)." (l. 45), and in case of regretting or no longer liking UGC previously shared on IG (l. 112-113), comparable to the motivations of previous participants.

Impression Motivations – Fie

IM goals – general UGC: Social approval and status, self-esteem maintenance, identity development
IM goals – touristic UGC: Social approval and status, self-esteem maintenance, identity development

Impression motivations also concerned goals of identity development, social approval and status, and self-esteem maintenance in the case of Fie, both when sharing touristic and general UGC. Once again, the goal-relevance element was related to general publicity, by publicly displaying valuable attributes and touristic experiences on IG, as exemplified through the statement "I think it makes me look like the kind of person who (…) travels, and where it's cool to get to see the world (…) I think I'd like to be the kind of person where people think 'oh, she travels a lot' or sees some of the world, and that's kind of exciting." (l. 23-25).

The goal-value element was concerned with needing others to react, in order to achieve the goals, especially when concerning goals of social approval, status, and self-esteem. This is exemplified through the statement "Maybe [I geotag them] also because I want people to see that I've just been there. (…) Like, 'hey, look at me, I'm in New York' or wherever it is." (l. 74 + 85) related to using geotagging as a tool for IM, and through the statement "I also tell myself not to think about [the amount of] likes, but it's impossible not to think about what other people think. (…) you also post things for other people to see it." (l. 65-66). This was relevant both in cases both concerning touristic and general UGC, however, no specific target was specified. Fie wants to be seen in accordance with her own values, i.e., as being a person who travels and spends time with friends, which makes the publicity of displaying such attributes valuable to achieve the goal. As in the former cases, image discrepancy motivated IM in instances where discrepancy arose between current self-image and former UGC shared to IG, as exemplified through the statement "I do it for two reasons. One is that I don't think it fits with the rest of my feed (…). But the other reason is -like, if it's selfies or

something, then I've looked too much at myself and have become too self-critical (…)" (l. 93-96),
once again showing how editorial changes on IG is used a tool for IM.

Impression Motivations – Louise

IM goals – general UGC: Social approval, self-esteem maintenance, identity development
IM goals – touristic UGC: Social status, self-esteem maintenance, identity development

Louise's impression motivations pertained to interrelated goals of social, self-esteem maintenance,
and identity development. However, aspects related to social status primarily pertained to sharing
touristic UGC, while aspects of social approval related to general UGC.

Publicity was, once again, central to the attainment of these goals, as all indicated goals revolved
around publicly claiming both socially and personally valuable attributes. This is seen through
statements such as "because when something extraordinary happens in my life, I want to share it with
others [on IG] because it's nice." (l. 10), and "(…) if you travel, then it shows that you have some
opportunities in your life, that others might not have. (…) It's about showing others that you also
have that opportunity, and that you're in a place in life where you can afford things like that." (l. 17-
19).

The identified impression motivations were mainly centred around motivations for sharing touristic
UGC on IG, which aligns with Louise's statement of "I mainly post on Instagram when I'm on
holiday" (l. 8). Moreover, goal-values related to general concerns of how she was perceived by other
people, and especially by like-minded people (l. 91), as to not publicly lose face-value in the eyes of
targets relevant for the attainment of both identity and social approval, exemplified through the
statement "I think it's a basic thing in people… That thing with 'I don't want to lose face' in front of
other people, and I think it's the same on social media." (l. 37).

Once again, motivations of image discrepancy were identified in relation to discrepancy between
current self-image and former UGC shared to IG, either resulting from self-criticism or association
with undesirable individuals, as seen through "I sometimes do that, deleting or archiving posts, or un-

tagging myself, if I don't think I look pretty on that picture, or if I don't want to be associated with those people." (l. 87-88).

Impression Motivations – Anne-Kathrine

IM goals – general UGC: Social approval, self-esteem maintenance, identity development
IM goals – touristic UGC: Social approval and status, self-esteem maintenance, identity development

Impression motivations identified in the interview with Anne-Kathrine pertained to goals of social approval and status, self-esteem maintenance, and identity development. Once again, aspects related to social status primarily pertained to sharing touristic UGC.

Indications of goal-relevance were concerned with a wish to publicly display personally valuable experiences, both as a means for achieving social approval and self-esteem, and to communicate desirable identity attributes related to touristic experiences. This is seen through statements such as "It [*the reason for sharing touristic UGC*] was because it was something out of the ordinary. It's not just sitting at home or doing something that everyone else could be doing that day. It's because you're out experiencing something (…) special." (l. 21-23) and "(…) getting to see the world, developing myself and broadening my horizon, see things and the world from another perspective. (…) Yes, [that's something I'd like to share with others on Instagram]." (l. 41-46)

Goal-values related to feedback received in response to this communication, as the achievement of goals of both social approval and self-esteem depended on others reacting to it. As stated, "it's not *just* about showing it to others" (l. 49), rather it's about having others react to it in order to enhance self-esteem and receive social approval. However, goal-values were somewhat reliant on specific target characteristics, as she stated to mostly post on IG to share such experiences with close friends and wanting them to react to said posts, whereas the perceptions and evaluations of others were less important, as seen through the statement "Mostly my close friends. They're also the ones who react to what I post. Of course, I am aware of other people seeing it as well, but I sometimes tend to post something esoteric (…) without thinking about there being 450 people who don't know what I mean (…) but my close friends know what I mean by it. (…) I have some kind of affiliation to this target group." (l. 137-146).

As in all former cases, motivations of image discrepancy were related to discrepancy between current self-image and former UGC shared to IG (l. 119-121).

Impression Motivations – Ida

IM goals – general UGC: Social approval, identity development
IM goals – touristic UGC: Social approval and status, self-esteem maintenance, identity development

While the impression motivations of I7 pertained to achieving goals of social approval, status, self-esteem maintenance, and identity development, thereby corresponding to the goals of the other participants, the motivations and manners for achieving these goals deviates from those of other participants.

Motivations for sharing touristic UGC similar to those of other participants concerned 1) goal-relevance dependent on publicly displaying touristic UGC to achieve social status and self-esteem enhancement, as indicated through the statement "I also think that I post in order to show off" (l. 27), and to communicate valuable identity attributes as someone who has a 'keen eye' for "finding authentic things and experiences when travelling" (l. 62), 2) goal-relevance dependent on expected contact with the target to achieve social approval, as indicated through the statement "I've experienced several people commenting on posts (…) in person (…), who said 'oh, it looked so nice where you were'." (l. 109), and 3) goal-value dependent on target characteristics of situational competition to achieve social status and self-esteem, as indicated through "It's probably (for) my friends from university. After all, it's a competitive environment." (l. 105).

However, motivations for sharing touristic UGC deviating in manner from those of others related to 1) goal-relevance dependent on *restricting* publicity to assume identity and status: "I think I like to be somewhat 'intriguing'. People can see on my story that I'm at the airport, and may think 'oh, I wonder where Ida is going?', and then I might wait until three days later to post another story about travelling back home from Paris, and [think] 'you weren't allowed on the trip… idiots'." (l. 82-85). As argued by Leary and Kowalski (1990), people may prepare privately to perform impression-relevant behaviours in public, and by actively choosing to withhold information related to her travels

until it was over, Ida perceived to manage impressions by holding her audience in suspense. The same applied to the goal-relevance of motivations for sharing general UGC, where she states that "(…) I'd like to be perceived as someone you see, but who is private. (…) I'd like to make people aware that I exist – not too often, but just enough for them to think 'oh yeah, I wonder what she is up to?'" (l. 33-34), thereby managing impressions by controlling or restricting publicity.

Moreover, while all former participants had acted on motivations of image discrepancy related to discrepancy between current self-image and former UGC shared to IG, by deleting or archiving undesirable posts, Ida stated that: "I've been close to [archiving or deleting posts]! But then I didn't (…) because I thought it seemed dishonest. (…) I think it appears as cheating, not wanting to stand by who you were at the time you posted it." (l. 97-100), thereby actively choosing not to engage in strategic impression management behaviour to stay true to self. One could even argue that the conscious action of *not* engaging in such behaviour is a self-presentational strategy in and of itself, as it means leaving UGC possibly discrepant with socially desirable attributes out for public display, to instead assume personally desirable identity attributes.

Finally, Ida was the only participant where clear indications of image discrepancy motivations non-related to editorial behaviour were identified.

For example, she states: "Seeing that I'm a mother of two, I think it can be challenging to profile myself on Instagram without falling into one of two categories: either as being a super-mom, showing how happy I am with my children and 'oh, everything is just so nice', or the other category being 'everything is messy, it's so difficult having children, and of course I haven't picked up dust bunnies in over two weeks, because having to manage a regular life is simply out of my league when I have children'. (…) there are two boxes you can be placed in as a mother on Instagram, and I'm actually careful not to be put in either one. (…) because I don't believe it corresponds to a description of myself." (l. 48-53 + 59) and "I think, in many aspects of my life, it's easy to quickly put me in a box. The one in class with children, the one in class who's a bit older, the one who got married young (…) I'm trying to dismantle that [perception], also on Instagram (…) to protest the boxes." (l. 135-138). Both excerpts indicate goals related to identity development, or what could perhaps be called identity assertion. The first statement indicates precautionary pre-emptive behaviours of IM on IG to avoid public association with undesirable social images, while the second excerpt indicates actively

engaging in strategic IM on IG to repair or counterbalance the undesirable misjudgements pertaining to other life aspect. Leary and Kowalski (1990) state that public failures before one target often lead to more positive self-presentations towards other target, and while it is uncertain whether the self-presentations of Ida are accordingly more positive, they are certainly aligned with her desired private identity.

Impression Construction

As seen in the analysis of Impression Motivation, all participants were indeed motivated to IM through displaying touristic experiences on IG. As previously stated, once a person is motivated to manage their impressions, the issue becomes one of determining the kinds of impressions to construct, and how to go about constructing said impressions. The five primary factors influencing the manner in which people manage their impressions are self-concept, desired identity, role constraints, target values, and current or potential social image.

Contrary to the previous analysis, this following analysis of the participants' impression constructions will be structured around the individual factors, instead of pertaining to each participant. As IM goals and motivations have already been established for each participant, this analysis seeks to explore similarities and differences between participants' impression constructions.

Moreover, only impression construction factors concerning sharing touristic UGC on IG will be included in the following, as the goal is to explore the factors pertaining to sharing such touristic UGC, rather than the factors influencing general sharing behaviours. Though impression construction factors related to sharing other forms of UGC have been identified in the coded interview transcriptions, they are not included in this analysis, except for instances where participants refer to factors pertaining to both touristic and non-touristic UGC. Note that not all statements representative of impression construction factors will be included in the analysis, but only text excerpts representative of identified tendencies or notable deviations.

Self-concept

The impression construction factor pertaining to participants' self-concept was the most frequently identified factors throughout all interviews. In the tables below, interview excerpts relating to the self-concept will be presented in order of their characteristics.

Table 1 - SC, personal value

Participant	Text excerpt	Characteristics
Petrea	l. 47: "I've always cared about travelling. I've travelled a lot as a child, so it's part of who I am."	*Personal value*
Louise	l. 26-27: "it's especially valuable for me, because I feel that when you travel, you learn something about other countries and cultures, but also that you always learn something new about yourself (…)"	*Personal value*
Charlotte	l. 153: "(…) I still like having those things [about travels and friends], both as a memory for myself, but also to showcase it on my profile."	*Personal value + recollection value*
Ida	l. 25-26: "I also post for my own sake. I know that when I post something [from my travels], it's funny to look back on it in a couple of years."	*Personal value + recollection value*

The text excerpts above are representative of a tendency identified in all interviews, where participants' reasonings for sharing their travel experiences on IG pertain to their own perceptions of travel being an attribute of personal value, and thereby wishing to share these personally valuable experiences with others. Moreover, several participants expressed the same sentiment as Charlotte and Ida, of not only wanting to display these valuable experiences to others, but also as a matter of personal recollection value.

Participant	Text excerpt	Characteristics
Emma	l. 20-21: "And I obviously post more if I'm doing something exciting. For example, when I was in South Africa for 18 days, I posted more than I would in everyday life."	*Personal value + frequency*
Charlotte	l. 59-60: "For example, when I was in Greece, I uploaded two posts within a week, whereas if I don't travel, it's probably only two posts a year. If I'm travelling, I automatically post more, because then I have some more content."	*Personal value + frequency*

The excerpts in table 2 are representative of another tendency identified in almost every interview, except for the interviews with Petrea and Ida, who incidentally were those with the lowest proportional distribution of touristic UGC. Participants who shared this sentiment all admitted to posting touristic UGC at higher frequency than 'everyday life' content, because of both wanting to share these experiences with others, and as the result of the value they attributed to these experiences being higher than that of other forms of content.

Table 3 - SC, value-based selectivity

Participant	Text excerpt	Characteristics
Emma	l. 81-84: "We experienced something every day (…) and, of course, I only posted the cool things. Bad things happened too, obviously (…) but I didn't post about that."	*Value-based selectivity*
Louise	l. 43-46: "It's especially the moments from where I feel most grateful for having the opportunity to travel (…) that I choose to post, because those are the moments where I've felt 'wow, I'm lucky'."	*Value-based selectivity*
Anne-Kathrine	l. 35-36: "(…) when we were travelling during our semester abroad, most of the cool experiences were posted on Instagram, and everything in between was confined to stories."	*Value- and format-based selectivity*
Anne-Kathrine	l. 189-191: "I might post a lot of travel pictures and videos, but it's an unpolished kind of pictures. I don't think I ever use a	*Value-based selectivity +*

	filter on them. At most, I change the lighting. (…) that's how I like it.	*photo-manipulation*
Petrea	l. 75-76: "I just think it's because that's how it looks best, for example, I keep the pictures that have the best light, because I think it's that shows a good vibe or a good mood (…)"	*Value-based selectivity + aesthetic considerations*

The statements in table 3 speak to yet another tendency identified across all interviews. Participants stated to be selective of what they publicly displayed about their touristic experiences on IG, while omitting less valuable aspects of their experiences. The things they did choose to share were either what they described as the 'cool' things or experiences, or the aspects of their experience that were of personal value to them. As Leary and Kowalski (1990) stated, the self-concept is operated by attempts to put the best parts of oneself into public view, which these statements reflect in the participants.

Moreover, the statement by Anne-Kathrine (l. 35-36) also reflects a format-based selectivity shared by all but one of the participants, reflecting that only what participants deem valuable is shared as permanent feed-posts, whereas less valuable content is shared in time-limited Instagram stories. The second statement by Anne-Kathrine (l. 189-191) also reflects a sentiment shared by most participants, namely of though selectively choosing what to share about their touristic experiences, they are aware of them still being somewhat true to the experience by not being set up or overly edited.

Table 4 - SC, deceit willingness

Participant	**Text excerpt**	**Characteristics**
Emma	l. 106-118: "I probably would do that [post a nice picture from a bad experience]. I actually think I've done that once. (…) No one would think that it looked like a bad experience (…) they'd probably just think it [the experience] was cool (…) there are no consequences to it."	*Deceit willingness*
Charlotte	l. 113-125: "I've actually edited one of my travel pictures, where I've photoshopped some people out of the picture to make it look cooler. (…) if I had posted the actual picture, there	*Deceit willingness +*

	would be 50 people in it (…) swimming in the water and a boat full of tourists (…) the picture was great, but it was ugly with all of those people in it, so I removed them. (…) as long as people don't know this, they'd probably just think 'shut up, that's so cool, the sun is shining and they're all alone in this nice place', but in reality it was full of other people, you had to wait in line for ages to jump from the springboard, we had to go home right after, while it was extremely hot and we were sweating… (…) So you kind of romanticize your travels."	*photo-manipulation*

The final excerpts representative of impression construction pertaining to the self-concept of interview participants relates to their willingness to making claims about themselves discrepant with their self-concept, in order to foster desired impressions. Both excerpts speak to an inclination of publicly showcasing their touristic experiences more positively than they were, and while the statements in 'Table 3 - SC, value-based selectivity' related to omitting negative experiences from public view by only displaying valuable experiences, the excerpts above speak to a readiness to actively portray negative experiences positively. While Emma's statement relates to having posted pictures from negative experiences without disclosing the true nature of these, Charlotte's statement represents a more extreme version of this, by actively manipulating the experience display by removing undesirable elements from her travel photo. As stated by Leary and Kowalski (1990), only when people are unlikely to be found out, people may try to represent themselves more positively than what is consistent with their self-beliefs.
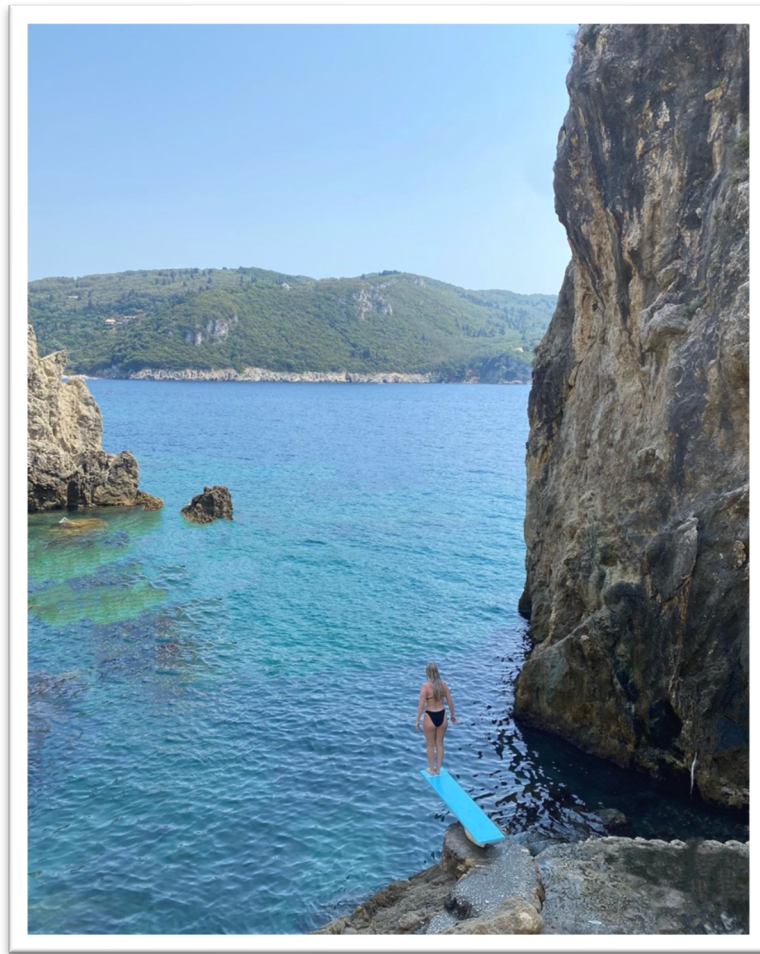
Both statements refer to the unlikeliness of such actions being discovered, as people would have no way of discerning the true nature of the experiences, as long as this information would not be made available by the participants themselves. As Emma states, "there are no consequences to it".

This also speaks to the visibility of having an IG account; pretence is more likely for individuals in highly visible occupations or situational contexts and occurs more often in superficial relationships, and IG provides people with a platform for publicly displaying themselves and their experiences to others, where deceit may be unlikely to be exposed.

Desired identity

The impression construction factor pertaining to participants' desired identity was also identified across all participants' accounts of sharing touristic UGC on IG. Excerpts and central themes are presented below.

Table 5 – DI, Desirable identity attributes

Participant	Text excerpt	Characteristics
Louise	l. 17-19: "(…) if you travel, it also shows that you have some opportunities in life that others might not have. It's about showing others that you also have that opportunity, and that you're in a place in life where you can afford things like that."	*Desirable identity-attributes*
Fie	l. 23-25: "If I'm being honest, then I think it makes me look like the kind of person who (…) travels, and where it's cool to get to see the world (…) I think I'd like to be the kind of person where people think 'oh, she travels a lot' or sees some of the world, and that's kind of exciting."	*Desirable identity-attributes*
Charlotte	l. 52: "(…) But also [that my IG profile is] reflects that I'm someone who travels a lot (…)".	*Desirable identity-attributes*
Emma	l. 70-72: "I don't know if I want to be seen the travelling type as such, but maybe as the type who experiences things, who dares to do things (…) I think I'd like that."	*Desirable identity-attributes*

Table 5 reflects some of the participants' motives to share touristic UGC on IG as this aligns with identity-attributes they find personally desirable related to travelling. Several of the interview participants expressed desires for being seen as 'people who travel' or at least as a person with the desirable attributes of someone who travels a lot, namely having opportunities in life, being able to afford such experiences, seeing the world, daring to do things, and thereby using IG to publicly claim these desired attributes by sharing their touristic experiences.

Table 6 – DI, Desirable identity-attributes and social comparison

Participant	Text excerpt	Characteristics
Louise	l. 31-32 + 145-146: "Kind of that upper class… (…) showing that you can buy those things and you can travel to those places, there is a kind of signalling effect to it. (…) they might have a Tesla that you dream of getting, or they're also on cool vacations to the Maldives (…) even though you don't have that, you can always try to imitate some of those things (…) for example pictures inspired by theirs (…)"	*Desirable identity-attributes + social comparison*
Anne-Kathrine	l. 219-222: "when we were travelling, there were some places where it would be cool to get some pictures taken, because we had seen other people having cool-looking pictures from that place. And then we tried to achieve that look. (…)"	*Desirable identity-attributes + social comparison*
Charlotte	l. 205-207: "(…) then it's probably a picture I've seen somewhere on Instagram, that I'd like to recreate (…) because I'd like to have the same picture as them."	*Desirable identity-attributes + social comparison*
Emma	l. 218-220: "because I also follow a lot of people [on Instagram] who travel, and then I think to myself that "oh, it could be cool go there myself", or like, if I know I'm going to go there, I also need to get a picture of that."	*Desirable identity-attributes + social comparison*
Ida	l. 30-31: "I think some people post travel pictures that are horrible clichés, and that are trying to mimic an add. (…) I really don't want to do that."	*Desirable identity-attributes + social comparison*

While the excerpts in table 6 also pertain to identity-attributes the participants find personally desirable related to travelling, they also reflect how social comparison influences intentions to share touristic UGC on IG. For example, Louise refers to the signalling effect related to displaying touristic experiences as a way of associating herself with an "upper class", thereby engaging in upward comparison. Moreover, she speaks to the aspirational value of once achieving those things, and publicly imitating such attributes.

Moreover, the excerpts from Anne-Kathrine, Charlotte, and Emma all refer to the same tendency of trying to recreate touristic UGC others had shared on IG, which speaks to the shared content of others being perceived as aspirational. Hence, the upward comparisons made by these participants can be seen as a motivational factor compelling them to reproduce touristic images shared by either desirable individuals or individuals with desirable identity attributes.

As these upward comparisons are made with others on IG, either influencers or people found through location-searches, or with unspecified members of a desirable social group, the comparisons can be made privately, which, according to Buunk and Gibbons (2007), makes the tendency to engage in upward comparison stronger than when actual contact with the comparison other is anticipated.

The tendency of engaging in upward comparison in relation to desirable identity attributes were identified in all participants, except for Ida. She was the only participant to openly admit dislike towards the touristic UGC shared by others on IG, and to actively manage impressions as to not be consistent with undesirable identity images, in this case "travel pictures that are horrible clichés, and that are trying to mimic an add". This indicates downward comparison, and, as previously stated, individuals who are threatened on a particular dimension prefer to socially compare with others who are thought to be worse off on this dimension. While it is not explicitly stated whether this pertains to any perceived threats, Ida was also the only participant to engage in IM as a result of image discrepancy, hence, the downwards comparison and distancing from undesirable identity images may relate to the assertion of identity.

Table 7 – DI, Desirable identity attributes and missed opportunities

Participant	Text excerpt	Characteristics
Charlotte	171-174: "(…) I was travelling for two-and-a-half months, and I'm sad that I didn't post more on Instagram back then. (…) also just for my own sake, so I could better remember it. I feel that I could have made a nice-looking feed during that time, so I kind of regret it."	*Desirable identity-attributes + missed opportunity*
Ida	77-80: "I can sometimes regret having travelled without posting anything about it. (…) But at the same I rejoice in coming home from a trip after having been able to contain	*Desirable identity-attributes + missed opportunity*

| | myself. That people had to learn about my trip to Paris from other ways than by seeing it on Instagram." | |

The statements above are representative of an interesting finding related to the lack of former self-presentation. Both participants report feeling regret as a result of not having posted about a touristic experience to its full potential, thereby missing in opportunity for IM. While Charlotte's motives were related to both aesthetic considerations and personal recollection value, Ida perceives the ability to 'contain' herself as a desirable identity attribute.

Table 8 - DI, Self-symbolizing through geotags

Participant	Text excerpt	Characteristics
Anne-Kathrine	l. 106-107: "It obviously looks a bit more exotic to geotag Phi Phi, Kuala Lumpur, or something, or some specific bar you're at. I wouldn't' do it in Aalborg (…) but I even would in Copenhagen."	*Self-symbolizing through geotags*
Emma	l. 183-184: "because then you're in some place cool. Like, in Paris, some cool restaurant you've heard about and that you think other people have heard about too, like 'hey, I'm here'."	*Self-symbolizing through geotags*
Fie	l. 75 + 85: "Maybe [I geotag them] also because I want people to see that I've just been there. (…) Like, 'hey, look at me, I'm in New York' or wherever it is."	*Self-symbolizing through geotags*

Table 8 reflects a tendency identified in all but one of participants, namely geotagging UGC of touristic experiences as part of a self-symbolising process. All participants, except Ida, stated to both geotagging touristic UGC more frequently than non-touristic UGC, and several stated to geotag such content to a more specific location, i.e., a bar or restaurant know by others, than they would otherwise. This can be seen as yet another way of touristic experiences being used to communicate valued identity attributes and using geotagging as a tool in this process.

Table 9 - DI, Self-symbolizing through sight-displays

Participant	Text excerpt	Characteristics
Charlotte	l. 87-92: "the pictures I posted from Paris (…) were also of the Eiffel Tower, the triumphal arch, and things that Paris is recognised for. (…) in London, I posted a picture in front of London Eye, because then people know where it is. In New York I also posted a picture of me sitting on the Brooklyn Bridge, so if I have a good picture from one of the main sights, that's probably what I'll post (…)"	*Self-symbolizing through sight-displays*
Ida	l. 61-67: "[*Are your travel-posts accurate reflections of the experience?*] Yes, they are. In those cases, I actually like including both sides. I like showing that I'm good at finding authentic things and experiences when I'm travelling. That I have a keen eye for details of what there is in that country… Like funny signposts or pretty avenues (…), while, at the same time, [showing] that you're stuck in a train for 40 minutes to get from the airport to where you're going or spending four hours at the airport because the plane is delayed. (…) it's okay to reflect in a funny way about how it is to be travelling."	*Self-symbolizing through sight-displays*
Ida	116-220: "I don't want my posts to be clichés (…) Actually, sometimes the things that I photograph and post [on IG] are a bit cliché. But then it's often in a series of multiple pictures that I post [*carousel post*], so it's in a kind of sandwich with other pictures. (…) I might sneak in a picture of the Eiffel Tower, but then it's going to be placed between two pictures of something more authentic (…) like winding streets and a dog (…) or something funny, such as me flipping through postcard."	*Self-symbolizing through sight-displays*

Finally, displaying built structures or symbols as part of a self-symbolising process also pertained to publicly claiming identity relevant attributes. The manners in which Charlotte and Ida go about displaying such sights differ, as Charlotte proudly displayed well-known sights such as the Eiffel

Tower, London Eye, Brooklyn Bridge, etc., while Ida chose to display more 'authentic' symbols such as signposts or pretty avenues, and only "sneak in a picture of the Eiffel Tower" if it was hidden between pictures of winding streets and such. However, both their motivations for doing so were still related to the assertion or development of desired identities through public displays of attributes consistent with each of their individually desired identities.

Role constraints

The impression construction factor pertaining to interpersonal determinants of role constraints was identified decidedly less in the participants IM efforts pertaining to touristic UGC.

Table 10 - Role constraints

Participant	Text excerpt	Characteristics
Emma	83-85: "bad things happened as well (…) but we all just posted what was cool".	*Group norms*
Charlotte	77-78: "it's not because people need to think that I'm having a perfect trip, but I just don't think they're interested in knowing that it was difficult to buy tickets, or that the weather was bad".	*Perceived disinterest*
Charlotte	178-180: "It's a bit difficult with throwbacks, because you're allowed to [post them], but not too long after the trip. I'm afraid that people will think "okay, can't you just go on another trip instead of being stuck on the old ones"	*Platform-specific norms*
Anne-Kathrine	208: "(…) in some way, you also think about what you display to others, because it's expected to have a certain format on Instagram."	*Platform-specific norms*
Fie	130-136: "In some way I'd wish that it was also within the norm to show all of the thing you don't do on Instagram (…) Like on the new app BeReal, where you can post about just sitting at home knitting, or cooking, or other ordinary stuff, where Instagram is only for the best parts of yourself. (…) I also have friends who are like 'I don't want to be part [of the new apps], and 'I just want to	*Platform-specific norms*

	be on Instagram where I can show the best things about myself'. I think that's a bit sad."	

The role constraints related to sharing touristic UGC revolved around three central themes: 1) not posting certain content on IG to conform to the norms of one's social group, 2) not posting certain content to due to a perceived disinterest of the target, and 3) being aware of the type and expected format of the content to conform to platform-specific norms.

Especially the third theme relating to platform-specific norms was recurrent in most interviews. Though not specifically related to sharing touristic UGC, several participants indicated that only some behaviours were 'accepted' on IG, and that content was expected to keep to a certain form, conditional of implicit social guidelines or rules.

Target values

Table 11 – Target values

Participant	Text excerpt	Characteristics
Petrea	l. 99: "I know that travelling is valuable to some of my friends."	*Perceived values*
Emma	l. 143-148: "(…) because when I've posted something, people have said 'oh, that looks so cool, where are you, what have you travelled through', and people have seemed interested when I've posted [about my travel experiences]."	*Perceived values*
Charlottel	l. 30-33: "(…) I just think it's cool when people travel a lot. And then I think that people probably think it's cool that I travel a lot, too."	*Perceived values*
Ida	l. 108-109: "They certainly post a lot about travelling themselves. If they appreciate seeing it? Yes, I think so. I think they like being inspired as to where to go."	*Perceived values*

The impression construction factor pertaining to target values concerned a general agreement that targets appreciated seeing touristic UGC, both from 1) a standpoint of the participants' themselves

perceiving it as valuable and thereby assuming that others would too, 2) expecting targets to perceive it as relevant as the targets themselves have previously shared such content, and 3) as a result of direct feedback upon sharing such content.

While participants do sometimes connect their motives for sharing touristic UGC to the perceived values of targets, they all stressed how travelling and tourism was personally valuable to them, consistent with truthful aspects of their identities that align with the values of their target.

Current or potential social image

Table 12 - Current/potential social image

Participant	Text excerpt	Characteristics
Emma	89-90: "We were in some kind of zoo where there were a lot of poor animals, and I didn't really like it, so I didn't post anything from there (…)"	*Restraining*
Charlotte	44-45: "if I only received 15 likes on the post from Paris, I would probably delete it. (…) and it actually didn't receive any likes when I initially posted it, which made me delete it (…)."	*Compelling*

Finally, the last interpersonal impression construction factor, current/potential social image, was only identified twice in relation to self-presentational efforts involving touristic UGC. The first statement by Emma is indicative of restraining behaviour, in his case not posting anything from the experience, as to not be publicly associated with something discrepant from her self-image. However, while this is indeed related to avoiding a possible threat to her social image, the self-presentations intentions may be some of mere selective behaviour based personal values and preferences.

The statement by Charlotte, however, is representative of a perceived threat to her public social image, by not receiving enough likes as a failure and thereby compelling her to initially delete said post. Interestingly, Charlotte was also the only participant who told of having disconnected the 'likes' function from her profile, and her followers would thereby not be able to see the specific amount of likes a post has received, but only he individual people who had liked it. Hence, even though the number of likes was not publicly displayed for others to see, she still perceived it is a public failure.

Discussion

Throughout the analysis, it became clear that people were most influenced to IM by intrapersonal impression construction factors such as self-concept or desired identity, rather than factors of the interpersonal dimension. Hence, these women's motives to use displays of touristic experiences were clearly related to personal desires. Though the self-presentational manners and behaviours in which participants' portrayed displays of touristic experiences slightly differed between some of the participants, their self-presentational goals ultimately all related to social approval, status, self-esteem maintenance, and identity development, and were primarily motivated by the publicity pertaining to IG. This could be explained by the life phase these participants all fall within; they may, to varying degrees, still be in a developmental phase of their lives, wherein they are trying to establish themselves and their identities. For example, all participants were still in the process of educating themselves, and some where close to graduating from university. This might impose a predisposition to consider what they ultimately want to do with their lives, both in terms of what careers to pursue, as indicated by Charlotte, and in terms of who they want to be, by exploring possible identity traits, and communicating these identities to others as a way of both development and assertion. The overt displays of touristic experiences on IG would thereby be seen as a way of communicating a valuable attribute of their self-image or as a desired identity attribute they wish to associate themselves with.

Moreover, some differences based on the ages of these participants were identified. As seen, all participants indicated how public displays of travel and touristic experiences were related to social status, however, status goals were least evident in Petrea, who was also the youngest participants. Her general goals for sharing UGC on IG were mainly related to identity development and social approval, and touristic experiences only made up 11% of the UGC shared to her IG account. On the other end of the spectrum, Ida's behaviours and goals were mainly related to identity assertion. Ida, who was the oldest participant, indicated other valuable life aspects as more important, and much of her IM behaviours on IG were related to establishing herself in accordance with personal values and identity attributes, rather than seeking social approval resulting from a clear self-understanding. She was also the only participant with children, who, according to herself, accounted for 50% of contents of her IG profile, and touristic UGC only amounted to 13% of her total posts.

While these participant accounts are not meant to paint a representative picture of all Danish women sharing touristic UGC on IG, they are reflective of the quantitative findings, namely that those individuals at each end of the age spectrum display less touristic UGC on IG proportionate to those towards the middle of the age spectrum, which could be explained by life-cycle conditions affecting posting behaviour.

Social comparisons may also impact young Danish women's motivations and manners for displaying their touristic experiences on IG. Almost none of the participants' admitted to socially compare with others whom they thought to be worse off, thereby not suggesting downwards comparison, at least in terms public displays of touristic experiences. The only exception to this was Ida, who indicated downwards comparison by admitting comparing her own 'authentic' touristic UGC to that of the 'horrible clichés' of others, which could be explained as a result of image discrepancy in other life aspects. However, upwards comparison was identified through all interview accounts, and mainly functioned as an antecedent for the intention to share touristic UGC and for determining the format this experience display would adopt. The upward comparison identified throughout participants' accounts was mainly confined to an 'inspirational' level, yet it drove participants to reproduce desirable touristic images shared by others, making such comparisons aspirational by nature. This relates to the findings by Lo and McKercher (2015), suggesting that SoMe and photography facilitate social comparison, and that the decisions of what touristic images to upload have less to do with how to best reflect the destination and travel experience, and more to do with how to best reflect the one's desired self-image.

These upward comparisons were not necessarily levelled at any clearly defined individuals, but rather towards unspecified 'characters' possessing attributes reflective of participants' desired identities, such as travel-influencers and members belonging to aspirational social groups. This also speaks to the nature of IG being a platform where 'lurkers' can observe the behaviours and characteristics of others, without having to associate with them (Bilgihan et al., 2016). When social comparison does not require individuals to reveal their own inferiorities to the other, nor the risk of the other looking down on them, comparison preferences are more upward than when one has to affiliate with the other (Buunk & Gibbons, 2007), hence only comparing upwards with such desirable individuals on IG to whom the participants are mostly unknow, diminishes the risk of the desirable other looking down on them. This is also reinforced by some of the participants' accounts stating that they do not want to

'compare' with their own friends and followers as such, but rather rejoice on their behalf when close friends have such touristic experiences. Several participants, however, still expressed benign envy upon seeing touristic UGC from friends and expressed wish to visit the same destinations, in part corresponding to the findings by Liu et al. (2019) of upward comparison acting as an antecedent of visit intention in cases where positive travel experiences were shared by a SoMe 'friend' perceived as similar. However, though participants only rarely explicitly stated to perceive themselves as 'better' when sharing touristic UGC on IG compared their friends, several expressed a hope or expectation of 'inspiring' others destination choices and visit intentions.

While all participants indicated that travel and tourism was related to an aspect of social status, the labelling of it as pertaining to 'status' per se results from my own interpretation of participants' accounts. However, whether it is specifically tied to status, or merely is an aspect of social approval, it does not contradict the finding of there clearly being a self-promotional aspect related young Danish women's displays of touristic experiences on IG in hopes for affirming reactions from others, as both openly communicated by the reacting other and as imagined by the individual.

Conclusion

The aim of this study was to explore the behaviours and motivations of young Danish women sharing travel- or tourism-related content to Instagram, in order to answer the research question:

To what extent do young Danish women display their touristic experiences on Instagram, and do they use online displays of touristic experiences as a tool for impression management?

It was found that Danish women aged 20-30 display their touristic experiences on Instagram to such an extent that posts displaying touristic experiences account for a mean value of 43% and a median value of 38% of their shared content. Considering that the sample was determined by a 90% confidence level and a 5% confidence interval, it can be concluded with 90% certainty that of all content shared on Instagram by Danish women aged 20-30, a mean of 43% or a median of 38% of their posts display touristic experiences, with a possible +/-5% deviation. This illustrated that, on

average, for every 1,5 – 2 posts posted to 38% of the sample members Instagram profiles, 1 post contained displays of touristic experiences.

Moreover, it was found that sample members aged 28 and 30 had the lowest proportion of posts displaying touristic experiences, comparable to sample members of other age groups, which was speculated to be a result of life-cycle conditions affecting posting behaviours and motivations.

Finally, a tendency to post touristic experiences within closer intervals and at higher frequencies than non-touristic posts was identified, and this tendency was affirmed through participant interviews as pertaining to mainly using Instagram to mainly display significant life-events and touristic/travel-related experiences.

In answer to whether these young Danish women use online displays of touristic experiences as a tool for impression management, it was found throughout all participant accounts, that they were motivated to impression manage resulting from self-presentational goals of both identity-development, social outcomes of approval and status, and self-esteem maintenance. The publicity of Instagram was relevant to the achievement of all goals pertaining to displaying touristic experiences as a means for self-presentation, and the impressions were mainly constructed around factors of valuable self-concept attributes and desired identity images. Geotagging was identified as one of the specific tools these women used to manage impressions around displays of touristic experiences on Instagram, and upward social comparison drove them to reproduce others' contents on their profiles, or to claim travel-related attributes comparable of that of desirable others. Hence, it can be concluded that young Danish women do indeed use online displays of touristic experiences as a tool for impression management.

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