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The influence of TikTok on tourism destination decision in the post-pandemic era

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Master in Marketing

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Abstract

This dissertation analyzes the influence of the social media Tik Tok on a tourism destination decision, mainly among participants that belong to the Generation Z, who are heavy users of social media. The recognition of social media as a relevant communication channel has been increasing by companies and citizens. In this context, the awareness of the Chinese Tik Tok has fast increased in China, as well as expanding internationally.

A quantitative study was designed expecting to cover not only Chinese participants. An online questionnaire in two languages, Chinese (Wenjuanxing 问卷星) and English (Google Form) was submitted to a convenience sample. Data could be obtained from 259 participants, with 177 valid participants. The multiple linear regression was applied to estimate the theoretical model.

Results show the absence of mediating effects, but the influence of Tik Tok on destination decision, mainly for Generation Z, on five determinants explain it: Trust on TikTok, Travel influencer on TikTok, Types of travel videos on TikTok, and the main information sources to get information. Only the perceived risk from accidents, such as airplane hijacking or terrorist attack, and with common problems, such as health, political stability and security explain destination decision. Tik Tok main users belong to the Generation Z in China, but it is still not popular to Portuguese young adult. Future studies should analyze more determinants and mediating effects, as consider short videos using new technologies (AI, AR and VR).

Keywords: Tik Tok, tourism destination decision, social media, Generation Z

JEL: M31

Resumo

Esta dissertação analisa a influência da rede social Tik Tok na decisão de destino turístico, identificando os determinantes mais relevantes principalmente para os que pertencem à Geração Z, que são os maiores utilizadores de redes sociais. O reconhecimento das redes sociais enquanto importante canal de comunicação tem vindo a aumentar por empresas e cidadãos. Neste contexto, a notoriedade da Chinesa Tik Tok tem aumentado rapidamente na China e internacionalmente.

Foi desenhado um estudo quantitativo esperando atingir não apenas participantes Chineses. Um questionário online redigido em chinês (Wenjuanxing 问卷星) e inglês (Google Form) foi submetido a uma amostra de conveniência. Obtiveram-se 259 respostas, das quais 177 válidas. A regressão linear múltipla foi usada para a estimação do modelo.

Os resultados mostram ausência de efeitos mediadores, mas que o Tik Tok influencia a decisão de destino sobretudo para a Geração Z em cinco determinantes: Confiança no Tik Tok, do influenciador de viagem no Tik Tok, do tipo de vídeos no Tik Tok e das fontes de informação obtidas. Apenas o risco percebido com acidentes na viagem, como sequestro de avião ou ataque terrorista, e com problemas comuns como saúde, estabilidade política e segurança explicam a decisão do destino. Os maiores utilizadores do Tik Tok pertencem à Geração Z na China, mas para os outros jovens adultos esta rede social ainda não é popular. Estudos futuros devem analisar mais determinantes e efeitos mediadores, bem como considerar pequenos vídeos feitos com as novas tecnologias (IA, RA e RV).

Palavras-passe: Tik Tok, decisão de destino turístico, rede social, Geração Z

JEL: M31

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1. Introduction

1.1 Theme

With the rapid development of our life, information fragmentation has become more and more common. People access to more information than before through the internet, while usually have less impression and understanding in their brains. Regarding Geysler (2022b), social media like Facebook, Weibo, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok are becoming important sources of information for people. For example, from the Twitter and Weibo trends, people will simply know the latest news of the moment by watching a short post with images and text. Therefore, in practice, Tham et al. (2019) observed that tourism destination marketing has also tried to pick up people's fragmented time and use social media sites to influence travel decisions among netizens, and the user keeps increasing.

What's more, at the end of 2019 and the beginning of 2020, with the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic and the consequent lockdown, it seems that social media is one of the only ways for people to feel that they are still connected with their friends and families (Pachucki et al., 2022). Then people especially teens have flocked to new social media platforms like TikTok (Unni & Weinstein, 2021). Moreover, during the isolation people around the world need a way to feel that they are not only connected but also entertained. Thus, TikTok, a short video app was latched by them, and it instantly became the "top stream" during the pandemic. According to TikTok user statistics from Brian (2022), it had a 1157.76% increase in its user growth rate between Jan 2018 and July 2020.

Regarding the statistics of Dixon (2022), TikTok has the highest growth rate during the pandemic in the US. A meeting held by Byte Dance said that short videos with most likes on TikTok are about tourism. 68% of users are following the tourism influencers, 80% of users even don't have travel plan but still like watching tourism contents and like and collect those contents. 90% of users believe that collect and see tourism contents will have a great value of reference (Byte Dance meeting, 2021) (Appendix A). These data showed us a relatively positive result of people's intention of travelling and showed that travel-related topics are hotly discussed on TikTok.

Nowadays we are in the post-pandemic era, the restrictions in every country keep decreasing, and people who have been holding back for a long time can finally get out of their homes to travel. It's a good time for marketers to take advantage of TikTok's popularity built up during the pandemic to do destination marketing and to help tourism recovery.

Considering various studies and the use of TikTok, the trust relationship between it and its users is quite important (Zhang et al., 2022), and it's crucial for marketers to know what kinds of travel videos people like the most (Chenchen et al., 2020). Moreover, risk perception is an essential factor for people to consider when making travel decisions (Wachyuni and Kusumaningrum, 2020), and because of the pandemic it will be a prerequisite for people to make a travel decision. Thus, the aim of this dissertation is to see which factor can explain better TikTok's influence on destination decision and since the main users of TikTok are young people like Millennials and GenZ, their attitude toward TikTok with different culture background will be worth studying. Since China is the homeland of TikTok and TikTok is popular in Portugal, also they have quite different culture background, this dissertation will focus on these two countries and make a comparison between them.

1.2 Research Problem

The existing literature points focus more on the destination management like how destination reacts when they are facing an unexpected tourist flow that caused by TikTok videos (Wengel et al., 2022), influencer marketing like the trust relationship between social media influencer and consumer (Lou & Yuan, 2019), the willingness of people to use social media as a reference when they are choosing a destination,(Tham et al., 2019) and the impact of TikTok videos marketing on tourists destination image cognition and tourism intention (Chenchen et al., 2020). However, TikTok as a destination choice influencer for young people with different culture background, if it is a priority choice for young people to take it as a travel reference are not explored a lot so far.

This dissertation will dive into the field of tourism, social media marketing and their changes caused by the pandemic. Covid-19 pandemic is like a "black swan" event for all of us, it's hard for us to predict what will happen in the future. Outbreaks and travel regulations keep changing in so many countries, will TikTok be a bridge to effectively connect tourists to destinations and contribute to the tourism recovery in the post pandemic era and whether it will have a positive influence are worth exploring question:

Tik Tok's influences to a destination decision and which factor can explain it better?
(Comparing Millennials and GenZ with different culture background.)

1.3 Research purpose

As we all know that the most damaged industry during the pandemic must be tourism and its related industry like hotel and restaurant, so tourism recovery will be important in the coming time. What's more, during the pandemic TikTok became famous around the world, it just like a window for us to see the world during the pandemic. Therefore, based on this situation and the existed studies this research is intended to focus on TikTok as a travel or destination choice influencer for young adult namely in China, to see the important components of it and young people's attitude toward it.

Moreover, by answering the research question in the previous chapter, this dissertation will also discover what can influence young adults' choice of destination in the post pandemic era, is TikTok helpful for tourists to perceive the risk better in the post pandemic era. Lastly, try to give suggestions for the improvement of TikTok communication regarding tourism and in the conclusion.

1.4 Research outline

The research outline is virtualized in the following figure.

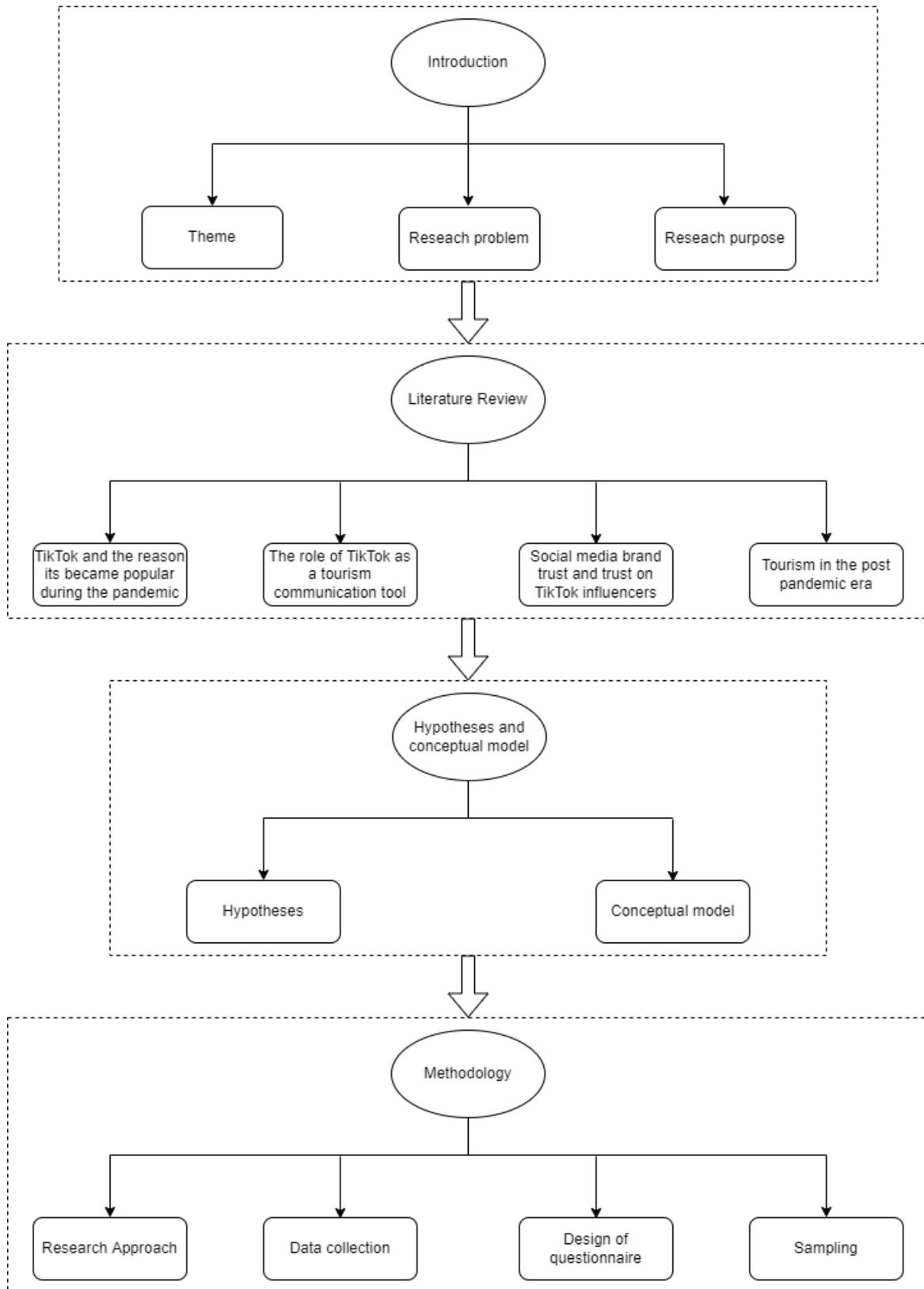


Figure 1.1– Research outline: first part

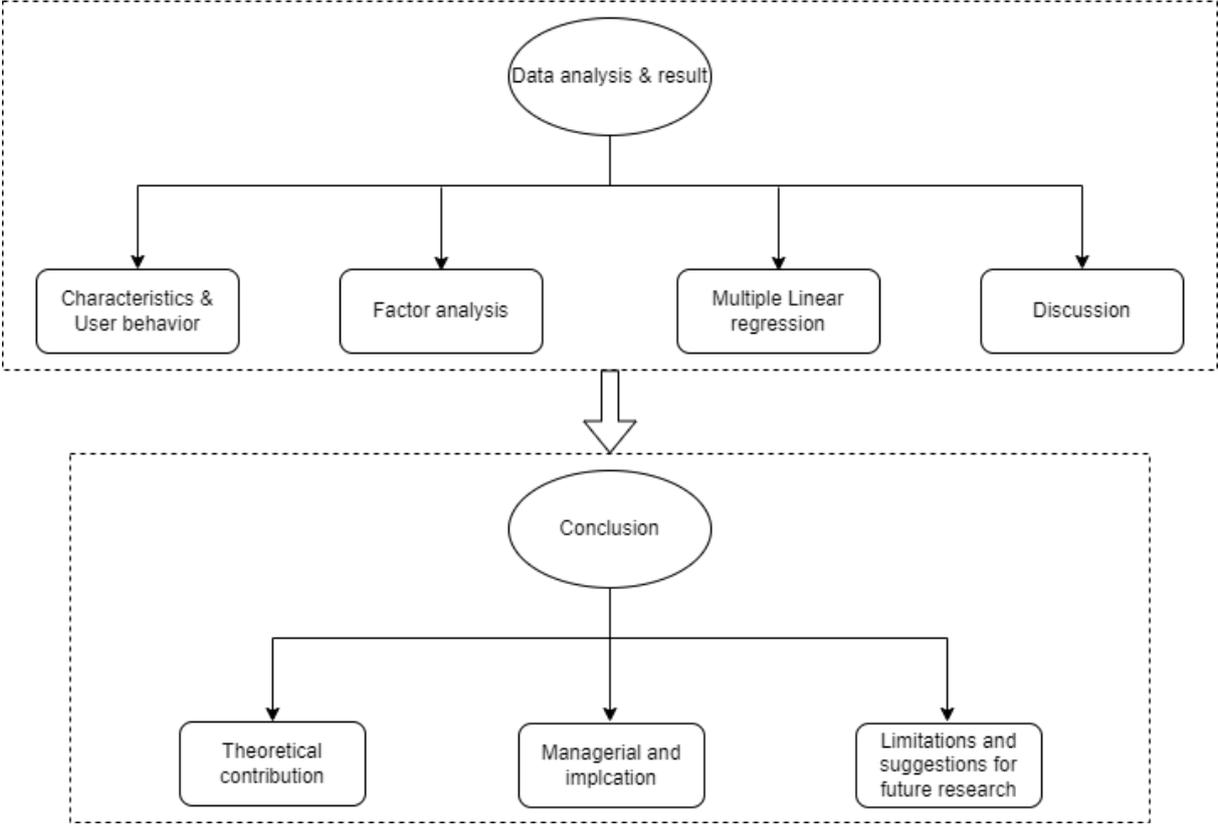


Figure 1.2– Research outline: second part

2. Literature review

According to this research goals and research questions, the literature review finds out the theoretical supports to the build the hypotheses and conceptual model. Firstly, it will give a basic introduction about TikTok context and why it went viral during the pandemic; then it discusses this social media as a tourism communication tool and how to promote destinations. Afterward, it will analyze the trust relationship between TikTok brand itself and its influencers. Lastly, it is indispensable to pass by a review of travel intention and its driving factors indispensable.

2.1 TikTok and the reason for its popularity during the pandemic

2.1.1 Overview of TikTok

TikTok is a short-form videos social media app created by a Chinese company named ByteDance with the foundation of music. Short videos usually last for 15-60 seconds so that they are easier to capture users' eyes (Du et al., 2020). In this app, an information code has been developed around entertainment activities with a large number of visual stimuli, which involves a large amount of dynamism, speed of production, consumption of content and creative demand. In brief, it relies on communication consisting of playbacks, funny stories and "mind-soothing" content (Alonso-López et al., 2021). Regarding the research of Feng et al. (2019) short video app like TikTok is a new type of social media featuring easy shooting, playing, editing, and sharing based on mobile intelligent terminals. Comparing with the traditional video app, short video apps tend to be shorter and then better users' fragmented time.

Therefore, according to the research of Du et al. (2020) TikTok as an easy-to-use editing tool causes the proliferation of grassroots and user-generated content. Users on TikTok can create a short video, choose background music for it, and add various special effects, stickers, and filters. It also features editing and shooting templates customized for different life scenarios, such as travel and anniversary. The videos created can be consumed on the platform or reposted on other social media channels like Instagram etc. At the same time, using the standard features of social networking services such as sending direct messages and "Like", "Share", and "Comment" options on videos, TikTok provides an immersive user experience and stimulation that meets different social needs, such as making new friends and building virtual intimacy and intimate relationships with the people they follow (Du et al., 2020).

2.1.2 TikTok's user profile

What's more, according to the research of Ditrendia (2020) The users of TikTok have already exceeded 800 million worldwide. Its users are mostly Gen Z and over the course of 2020 it showed a significantly increase in Millennials and even Gen X users because of the first strict lockdowns resulting from covid-19 pandemic (Alonso-López et al., 2021). A statistics done by Aslam (2022) shows that roughly 43% of TikTok's global audience is between 18 and 24 years old. 32% of TikTok users are aged between 25 and 34. Only 3.4% of TikTok audience is older than 55. The reason why TikTok is so appealing to young generation like Millennials and GenZ it's because it provides micro-entertainment and personalized content. TikTok use its unique recommendation algorithm that allows it to identify users' interest based on user behaviors and then pushes personalized content in a "for you" feed (Du et al., 2020).

2.1.3 Covid-19 influences on TikTok

As we all know, the past year was a hard year. To be safe, we experienced the lockdown and travel bans, we must be apart. However, social media seems become the only way for us to feel that we are still connected with our friends and family. Therefore, people have flocked to new platform like TikTok and old platform like Facebook (Molla, 2021). According to Southwick et al. (2021) people are increasingly finding information through digital and online platforms with an increase of 40-70% compared to pre-pandemic. Also, in the page 2 of this research shows that non-educational screen time among young people has significantly increased. Therefore, social media like TikTok have played an important role in "Youth resocialization in a pandemic society" and Covid-19 information dissemination.

In 2020, the young adults were experiencing social distancing, solitude, and loneliness during the pandemic, then they found a new social media app called TikTok where they can vent their emotions and helped TikTok to find its voice (Samira, 2020). According to the Statista, taking the US as example the annual Facebook user growth rate in 2020 is 8.7% and for TikTok the growth rate is 85.3%. ("Topic: Social media use during coronavirus (COVID-19) worldwide", 2021) What's more, in the US alone, TikTok had more than 45.6 million users at that time which is nearly 14 percent of the total U.S. population, and its unique algorithm meant that users of the platform saw global videos, not just those of their friends they followed (Samira, 2020). Hence, TikTok provided diverse content for users who were stuck at home and need entertainment. More importantly, it provided a place for young adults to express themselves from sharing their mundane routines to expressing their deepest fears of illness and isolation, these young adults also provided a window into the pandemic that is hard to see in

the mainstream news (Samira, 2020). Regarding this research, TikTok was a place where they laughed, played, danced, and expressed their voices. Looking back on that resilient world, while people did have challenges with access, equality, learning, and connection, they can also see how much there was to discover in those painful times through TikTok.

2.2 The role of TikTok as a tourism communication channel

2.2.1 TikTok on tourism

According with Wengel et al. (2022) study contemporary tourists increasingly use social media, such as the very popular TikTok app, during the pre-travel, on-site experience, and feedback stages, as these tools are increasingly guiding consumer behavior in the travel industry and shaping tourists' perceptions, feelings, and experiences. Therefore, opinions and suggestions obtained through social media, especially video reviews that recognize travel experiences and increase interest in specific locations, are becoming more and more critical in the decision-making process of vacation destinations (Wengel et al., 2022). Engagement with short-video platforms can be related to self-representation and social identity, especially when related to tourism (Du et al., 2020).

What's more, short-form video like TikTok, Snapchat, and Instagram are also commonly used for altruistic reasons, which is to share the journey of aesthetic pleasure with others. In the research from Du et al. (2020) the international version of TikTok largely target young generations via quirky videos including lip-syncing, comedy, and memes, and the Chinese version TikTok called Douyin boasts diverse contents like travel, makeup, pets, and cosplay etc. with a wider range of users. Moreover, Douyin has been positioned as an important platform for marketing tourism destinations and cultural heritage since 2017 (Bytedance, 2020). In a meeting held by Byte Dance (the company of TikTok), it said that from the data they have collected, short video with the most like regarding tourism have something in common. Therefore, they have summarized a formula for short video about tourism, which is the "BEST" model. "B" is "Background Music", the right music with the right scene can make a deep impression on users; "E" is "Eating", beautiful picture of tasty local foods can be very attractive and motivative; "S" is scenery, discover the unique scenery around the world; "T" stands for "Technology", a good video always can be empowered by wonderful technological facilities (Byte Dance meeting, 2021) (Appendix B).

Pollack (2021) stated that TikTok has become an exciting marketing channel for tourism, since travel topic is one of the most popular topics on the platform. For example, destinations

such as Dubai, Japan, Seoul, and Thailand are active under the #tiktoktravel hashtag. In difficult times such as now, TikTok offers the opportunity to create a platform and provide suggestions for future trips to young travelers. However, so far, few brands have used TikTok as a marketing platform. This is an advantage for newcomers, as the platform is not yet flooded with marketing content and is therefore a somewhat unexplored terrain. According to the research from Snow (2021), TikTok can be the new travel agent, and tourists can get so many useful tips from the travel TikTokers' posts. The easiest way to start travel planning with TikTok is to simply follow a hashtag. For instance, under #travelhack, a Salt Lake City-based flight attendant called Kat Kamalani's series of hotel and airplane hacks. She gives advice on how to check into a hotel safely or what drinks to avoid on the planes (Snow, 2021).

2.2.2 Promoting destinations with TikTok

In China, the generation Millennials who shows unprecedented enthusiasm toward consuming, creating and sharing travel videos on the short-form video platform TikTok (or Douyin as it's known in China). Therefore, TikTok has played a more and more important role in shaping the image of destinations, changing visitor behavior, and mediating the visitor experience (Du et al., 2020). For example, a 15sec short video about a female dancer who dressed in Tang Dynasty's costume dancing like a roly-poly toy went famous on TikTok successfully and attracted more than 230 million views, making Xi'an became a top "influencer" and the most consumed tourism destination on TikTok. (Bytedance, 2020) This video was shot by a TikTok user who traveled to Xi'an and recorded the roly-poly dance and edited it by adding Chinese neo-traditional music trending on TikTok. This creative way of promoting Chinese traditional culture immediately went viral and then thousands of tourists travel to Xi'an to shoot similar videos and post them on TikTok, then this kind of videos became a TikTok trend with hashtag gradually. This is a good example of tourists' interest in video content, and how the prevalence of social media has reshaped the contemporary travel experience.

Li et al., (2020) taking Cheng Du city as an example, found that Local food can be a really attracted factors for tourist to choose a destination. Creating a food-based city brand is conducive to creating a differentiated destination image. According to the authors Food tourism is becoming a trend as more and more cities are attracting tourists through food. What's more, food videos on social media can communicate food messages visually and vividly, thus helping to spread the image of the destination based on food. According to the statistics from CASSDATA, (2019) TikTok as the largest short video social media platform in China, food is one of the main themes of TikTok short videos which account for 14% number of views,

ranking third among all themes. The content of these short food videos involves food and drink evaluation and food exploration stores, for example, forming a group of “influencers’ food places” and successfully shaping the image of a food-based destination (Li et al., 2020). Also, according to the research from Li et al., (2020), Chengdu in China was the first city in Asia who won the title of international “City of Gastronomy” and has developed a city brand about food. On TikTok, short videos about Chengdu’s food are highly viewed, delivering a unique destination image to potential visitors.

Destination marketing promotes the realization of tourism policies and should be coordinated with regional development strategic plans, and it should also guide the optimization of tourism impacts and the maximization of regional benefits (Buhalis, 2000).

Chenchen et al. (2020) focused on four main areas of an international touristic destination: destination image, destination marketing organization, destination promotion, information technology and destination marketing. The authors’ study results showed that regarding destination marketing, it could increase the value, image of a destination, and then make potential tourists fully recognize the advantages of the region as a destination marketing method to attract tourists’ attention.

Over the past few years, social media has become a key channel for tourist attraction to market to young audiences following (simpleview, 2021) This research stated that when go the tourism planning stage, GenerationX tends to use Pinterest for travel inspiration, Millennials tend to use Instagram to find insta-worthy restaurants and attractions for future trips, and GenerationZ is the main audience segment of TikTok. Therefore, for destination, it’s important to know that young adult can be the planner for family trips and can plan trips of their own in the coming years. Furthermore, according to Simpleview (2021), the average engagement rate of TikTok is 29% which is way more than Facebook and Instagram with the average engagement rate of 3%-5%. Thus, TikTok has great potential to be considered as a destination marketing tool in the future.

2.3 Social Media brand trust and trust on TikTok’s influencer

Mapping the efficacy of marketing communications to build stronger brands on social media has always been a challenge (Upadhyay et al., 2022). As brand content, media and social media become more media-like, consumer technologies continue to converge, and media services expand into multiple platforms of infotainment to foster brand loyalty, there is a need to reevaluate how brand trust is evaluated in a media space that is increasingly less divided

between numerous content and platforms (Chan-Olmsted & Kim, 2022). In the research from Chan-Olmsted and Kim (2020), it shows that digital platforms and technologies play an important role in the erosion of trust. The authors added that the ubiquitous web, low-threshold content production and an interactive media ecosystem that is available anywhere and anytime has accelerated the reduction of trust. Also, they considered that at the same time, after decades of enthusiasm and dependence on media and technology, the public is losing trust in the media systems and digital technologies that permeate every part of their lives.

With the rapid development of social media, consumers can share their brand experiences and comments online easily and are able to have interaction through social commerce like using online forums, reviews, recommendations, and ratings (Zhang et al., 2022). Research from Hajli (2014) has showed that social media usages lead to increased brand trust and intention to purchase, through the increased social interactions of consumers. Research from Liu et al. (2018) reported that brand trust can be influenced by consumers' trust on a social media's site. However, trust in online environment is complex, it needs for structured assurance of security and privacy, and the lack of tangible brand cues. Yet, trust is critical to attracting traffic and completing successful online interactions, as well as creating and maintaining online communities and virtual groups (Pentina et al., 2013).

From the perspective of consumer behavior, previous studies believed that reliable sources increase consumer attitudes towards advertising and brands, purchase intention, and price sensitivity (Marhaeni et al., 2022). Therefore, several scholars have paid attention to celebrity trustworthiness in addition to study on source credibility, and regarding their studies celebrity credibility has a beneficial effect on advertising and brand perception, purchase intentions, brand reputation, company credibility, brand equity and brand image (Marhaeni et al., 2022).

According to the statistics from Yahoo finance (2022), consumers now trusting social media influencers more than brands. 37% of consumers trust social media influencers over brands; Gen Z and Millennials are twice as likely to trust influencers than Boomers. Regarding TikTok, it's only a platform for people to create their own contents, so trust on TikTok is trust on its influencers to a certain extent. TikTok's influencer marketing has gained tremendous traction since its inception but is really took off in 2020 (Contributor, 2022). Moreover, according to the research from Contributor (2022), because of TikTok's unique algorithm can make your content go viral easily, or at least it can help your content arrive new people and your targets since it often knows their users very well. Therefore, talking about the trust on TikTok's influencer will be crucial. In research from Pop et al. (2021) once followers trust in

influencers, they will accept their suggestions and the products they promote without hesitation, trust is positively related with purchase intention.

2.4 Tourism in the post pandemic era

2.4.1 Tourism and Covid-19 pandemic

There are so many factors can affect tourism, such as terrorism, war, social tension, and public health issues. The significant impact of crises such as the SARS epidemic in 2002-2004, the Iraq war in 2003 and the global financial crisis in 2009 is evidence of this. However, the industry has typically responded flexibly to external shocks and recovered without entering a prolonged recession (Qiu et al., 2020). Therefore, according to UNWTO. (2020a) there was continued growth in international tourism until the outbreak of COVID-19. Then according to UNWTO. (2020b), unlike previous crises, COVID-19, which erupted in early 2020, dealt a huge blow to international tourism demand and had a clear impact on foreign consumer market. The outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent national lockdowns as well as containment methods such as social distancing have decreased people's willingness of travelling and paralyzed the industry from airlines to hotels and restaurants. In terms of control the in the numbers of death and infections countries like Denmark, South Korea, China, New Zealand, etc. have been easing their control and lifting the lockdown measures. However, if the recovery can go back to normal is still debatable (Kim & Liu, 2022). What's more, the compliance to health policy rules is also very important and may vary with the local context, and those policy measures may not be equally effective in different parts of the world (Bargain & Aminjonov, 2020). Thus, for tourists they might have some information gaps, and social media will be the best way to fill these gaps.

Hosseini et al. (2021) taking China as an example, mentioned that government and its actions is a crucial factor in improving the tourism situation. They also said that open communication and the sponsored loans of the government are essential factors to improve tourism during the coronavirus disease. Moreover, in the research from Hosseini et al. (2021) declared that the Covid-19 pandemic causes changes in the orientations of tourism. The authors illustrated the example from Canada where sanitary tourism is very effective to develop tourism, the ecotourism like spa tourism can be a good direction for tourism recovery in the post pandemic era.

2.4.2 Travel intention and its driving factors

Regarding tourism in the post pandemic era, it is important to know the tourists' behavior, their travel intention and travel anxiety (Wachyuni & Kusumaningrum, 2020). Tourists' behavior

can be divided into four stages: 1) the tourist recognizes the need for tourism; 2) tourist collects information related to tourism; 3) tourist determines the tourist decision, which is followed by a tour; 4) the last stage evaluates the tourist trip that has been carried out. Wachyuni & Kusumaningrum (2020) explained that these stages are crucial for tourism businesses to understand tourists' behavior and to predict the sustainability of their businesses.

Travel intention, it's related to the desires or intentions of tourists in making a tour. According to the research of Wachyuni and Kusumaningrum (2020), the main driving factors of travel intention are personal and information sources. Especially about sources of information, it's more important than personal factors in the context of forming tourism destination perception (Koo et al., 2016). What's more, intention to travel is also influenced by tourists' risk perception and the sense of safety they felt, because risk factors can create anxiety among tourists about what might happen to them during their trip (Reisinger and Mavondo, 2005).

Moreover, travel anxiety concerns the tourist self-anxiety about travel. It is a subjective feeling that arises from exposure to an actual or potential risk, a feeling of nervousness, anxiety, stress, vulnerability, discomfort, disturbance, fear, or panic. Tourists' perception about safety and intention to travel will decrease when anxiety increase (Wachyuni & Kusumaningrum, 2020). Once tourists feel their safety will be 'at risk' when travelling, they will have a negative perception of a tourist destination, and this again closely related with the information they received from various sources. In the research from Wu et al. (2011), the exposure to the public and social media has an impact on tourists' intention to visit a tourist destination. For example, nowadays with the global pandemic situation, people will be definitely influenced by the news they received from different social medias (Wachyuni & Kusumaningrum, 2020).

Social media is an effective way of communication. In this current situation, since we cannot fully overcome the coronavirus now and it keeps mutating, we need to know how to live with covid-19 and find out the way to travel with the lowest risk. Therefore, as an increasing number of people to travel again and in the research of Borges-Tiago et al. (2021) travel sentiment can be a crucial factor to figure out the most effective way of online communication. Travel sentiment reflects the tourist's willingness to travel, and it is reported as a combination of travel intentions, travel plans, and travel concerns. Highlights the fact that these digital communication strategies need to consider the adjustments to tourist behavior that have occurred in the post-COVID-19 era, especially their preference of traveling within their own country and for destinations promoted as "safer" regarding Covid-19.

3. Hypotheses and Conceptual Model

This dissertation focuses on the influence of TikTok on destination decision. Considering the previous literature review, the six of following studies constitute this research framework as they are a reference in measuring the variables that have a significant impact on people's tourism destination choice through TikTok's influences. Thus, this chapter will take travel intention as dependent variable and test those relevant variables that can influence it and see if they are positively or negatively relate with destination decision.

The studies will be discussed in the following order:

1. Zhang et al. (2022)
2. Pop et al. (2021)
3. Chenchen et al. (2020)
4. Wachyuni and Kusumaningrum (2020)
5. Reisinger and Mavondo (2005)
6. Koo et al. (2016)

According to the research of Zhang et al. (2022), brand trust can be extended to social media brand trust. In this social media era, the need to use social media is becoming increasingly diverse as communication between audience and media has become two-way, and media audiences have become active contributors to social media content, rather than just passive recipients of information. The authors argued that trust on social media brands can influence people's purchase intention as the others tangible and intangible goods. Regarding Pop et al. (2021), social media influencers shape consumers' desires and perceptions of destinations, thus influencing individuals' purchase intentions. When people trust an influencer, their opinions are easily swayed by it, therefore influence their intention and decision. In the research from Chenchen et al. (2020), various marketing types can influence tourists' image perception and then influence their travel decision, and the most influential marketing method is interactive marketing, which can be short videos and live streaming. The authors also found that the different video types will have different level of impact on tourist's willingness of travelling. The five popular video types on tourists' travel wishes listed from high to low are: City Architecture, Delicacy, Natural Scenery, Experience Items, Historical Allusions. What's more, in the research from Wachyuni and Kusumaningrum (2020) and Reisinger and Mavondo (2005), from tourists' perception of travel risk and their priority aspects of destination we can see that risk perceived can be a crucial factor when they are making a trave decision. Finally,

Koo et al. (2016) found that information sources are more important than personal factors in the context of forming tourism destination decision.

Therefore, the following four variables were selected as the relevant determinants for choices of travel destination, since they have impact on destination decision: Trust on TikTok, Travel influencer on TikTok, Types of videos on TikTok, Risk perception and the main information sources from traditional media and social media to get information.

Since the relevant variables have already developed, and they can explain the choice of travel destination, the connection between these variables and travel destination decision are hypothesized. In the following chapter, the hypotheses will be stated.

3.1 Hypotheses

Hypotheses will be developed to support the research questions of this thesis. Hypotheses are speculative assumptions and hypothetical explanations of the causes of the problems under study made by the researcher based on the empirical facts and scientific theories (Deeptanshu, 2022). By formulating the hypotheses, they can help the researcher of this thesis to answer the research questions and understand which variables can influence the choice of travel destination by TikTok, which is the dependent variable.

Trust on social media brands was detected as a variable that has impact on the destination decision. A social media brand can provide not only functional experiences but also emotional, social, and personal values and then fulfill consumer's needs at different levels, which can increase trust in social media brands. Zhang et al. (2022) When trust relationship between a social media brand and its users was built, it may influence people's action and for example the destination decision. Similarly, we can obtain when people trust on TikTok, they will let it influence their "purchase intention" which is their intention of travel and destination decision. Thus, the first hypothesis was developed:

H1: Trust on TikTok is positively related with the destination decision.

According to Pop et al. (2021), 80% of users who turn to social media for travel purposes seek information about destinations and accommodations and rely heavily on prior advice. More and more travelers are getting their destination inspiration from all social media influencer, and influencers' posts can positively influence their willingness and intention of purchase. When adapted to tourism, it will be the intention of travel:

H2: Travel influencer on TikTok is positively related with the destination decision.

In the research from Chenchen et al. (2020), it also found that Types of videos on TikTok can also influence the travel intention and the affect the destination decision. The authors have summarized 5 types of video types regarding tourism on TikTok. The most favorable video is City Architecture. When promoting a city or a destination with short videos, it's important to know what kind of video tourists want to see and can have influence on them (Chenchen et al., 2020). Based on these, the third hypothesis was developed:

H3: Types of videos on TikTok is positively related with the destination decision.

In the post-pandemic era, risk perceived can be the most important factor for tourists to consider when they are planning a trip (Wachyuni & Kusumaningrum, 2020). Also, risk perception on the other words can be safety perception as well, it can directly influence tourists' travel intention. If tourists feel that their safety will be "threatened" when visiting a destination, they will have a negative perception of that destination (Reisinger and Mavondo, 2005). Therefore, we have the fourth hypothesis:

H4a: Risk perception is negatively related with the destination decision.

Moreover, risk perception could be considered as a mediator between other variables with the destination decision. Types of videos on TikTok could help tourists in perceiving the risk and then influence the destination decision. However, the prerequisite is if people trust on TikTok. Therefore, trust on TikTok is also related with risk perception, the more people trust on a social media, the more they can perceive and believe in it. What's more, risk perception is also related with source of information since the risk they feel and perceive can come from various sources of information.

H4b: Risk perception is a potential mediator in this model.

Regarding the research of Wachyuni and Kusumaningrum (2020), source of information is one of the main important drivers of travel intention. In the context of forming perceptions of tourism destinations, information sources are considered more important than personal factors. And in the research of Koo et al., (2016), they stated that people usually receive information from 2 main sources, one is mass media like TV, newspaper, and magazine etc. and another one is social media like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and TikTok. These 2 main sources both have positive impact on destination content gratification.

H5a: The main information sources from traditional media is positively related with the destination decision

H5b: The main information sources from social media is positively related with the destination decision

Destination decision can be affected by experiences and suggestion from other tourists online, and social media is a main channel for people to get travel information. (Pop et al. ,2021) Therefore, influencers’ experiences sharing, and suggestion may change tourists’ decision relating to book a trip or tourist products and some negative feeling may even change their existing travel plans. Thus, here we can define our independent variable: **Destination decision**.

After stating all the hypotheses, the conceptual model will be developed.

3.2 Conceptual Model

Here, all the relationships between the variables and the hypotheses are virtualized.

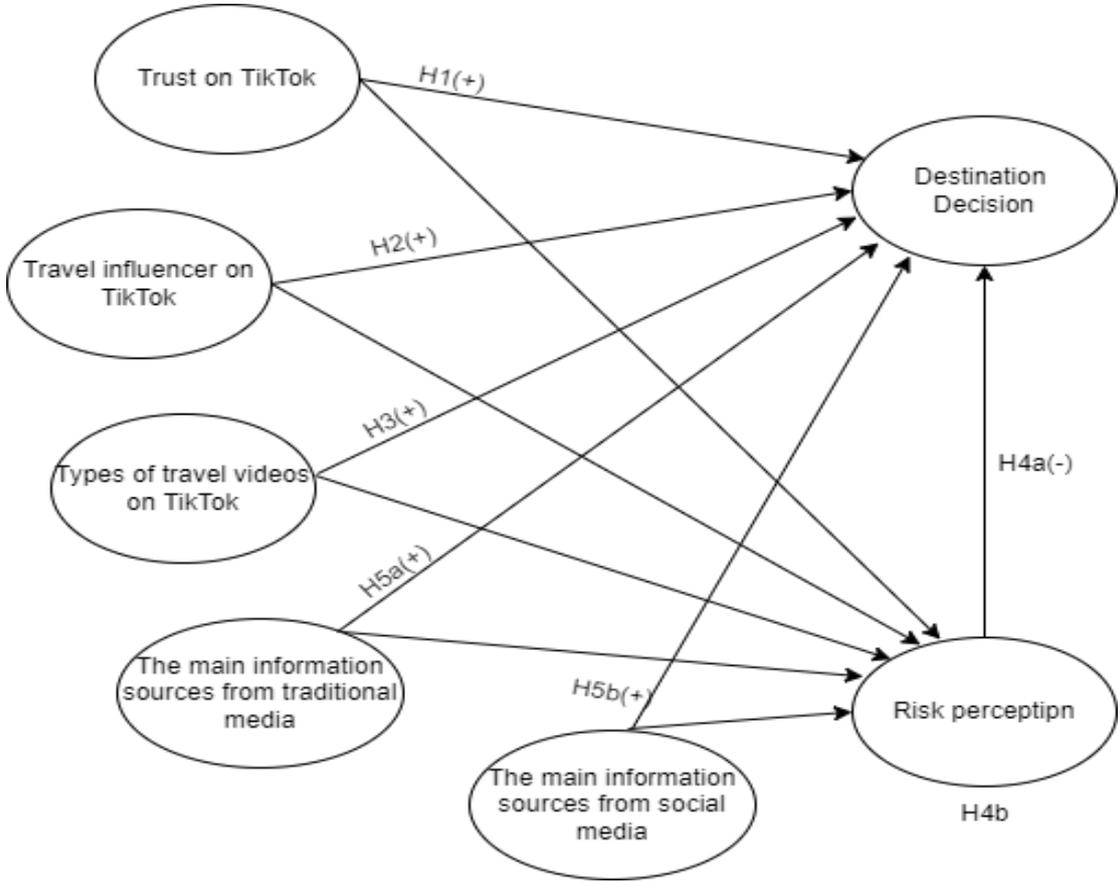


Figure 3.1– The conceptual model

Source: Own elaboration

4. Methodology

In this research, the relationships between Trust on TikTok, Travel influencer on TikTok, Types of travel videos on TikTok, the main information sources to get information, risk perception and the destination decision are tested by a quantitative methodology. This chapter explains the methods to data collection, the questionnaire design, the sampling strategy and finally operationalization of the constructs will be performed.

4.1 Data Collection and sampling

An online survey to collect data has been chose to collect data and access the target population. This study addresses, young adults of GenerationZ and Millennials, those who are expected to spend more time on internet and on the app TikTok, it is worthwhile to reach them online.

Moreover, questionnaire is relatively timesaving for both researcher and participants so that allow the survey to collect opinions of many participants in a limited time. Also, it is very efficient and suitable for computer processing of data, saving the cost and time of analysis. However, questionnaires have strengths and necessarily have limitations. In the questionnaire survey, the recovery rate and efficiency of the questionnaire has a certain ratio in order to make the survey information representative and valuable. Since the data is anonymous, it is hard to guarantee if the participants provide the accurate characteristic and demographic information.

All in all, this research decided to use the online survey method mainly because it can reach the target group easily and since all the questions are in the form of Likert scale, so it will not take up too much time of participants.

The tools for making the online questionnaire were Google Form and Wenjuanxing(问卷星). Google Form was for participants outside China and Wenjuanxing (问卷星) was for participants inside China.

4.2 Design of questionnaire

This questionnaire was designed based on the literature review and hypotheses and consist of two main parts with 25 questions in total, participants can finish it in around 8 minutes.

The first part includes five demographic questions about nationality, age, gender, educational level, and employment status, one filter question “Do you use TikTok?” and two questions about the use of TikTok. If the participants answer “No” in the filter question, they can finish the questionnaire immediately and the questionnaire will only collect their

demographic information. For participants who choose “Yes” they will continue answering the next questions: two TikTok-related questions in the form of multiple choices about the reason they use TikTok and the frequency of using TikTok.

Then the second part will test the perception of people on the influence of TikTok on destination decision in the post-pandemic era with seventeen questions measured in seven points of a Likert-type scale. The first four questions are about “Trust on TikTok”, then three questions about “Travel influencer on TikTok”, one question about “Types of travel videos on TikTok”, three questions about “Risk perception”, two DIY questions about both “The main information sources to get information” and “Risk perception”, two questions only about “The main information sources to get information” and finally two questions about destination decision.

4.3 Sampling

Since this research desires to reach a large number of respondents and to identify which of them is relevant to this study, a target population is chosen. Then a non- probability convenience sampling approach is also chosen since this approach is a method of selecting units from a population using subjective(non-random) methods, and it is easy to apply (Statistics Canada, 2021). The target population of this research are young adults who are using TikTok in their daily life. Since the focus of this research is to study TikTok’s influences on destination decision, so the participants must be TikTok users. After answering “Yes” in the filter question, participants will be asked about the use of TikTok and the frequency of using TikTok. Then, when asked about the perception of different social media, this questionnaire also give other famous options of social media brands to compare their influences on destination decision with TikTok. Based on Statista (2022), this questionnaire selected Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and Twitter for comparison. The questionnaire distribution strategy was developed by finding the right networks that can reach the TikTok users, among them:

- WeChat students’ groups
- Instagram
- Facebook
- WhatsApp students’ groups

5. Data analysis and results

The online questionnaire was launched on 30th of August and closed on the 13th of September, with 259 answers in total, but since 82 of them are not TikTok users, only 177 participants are valid.

Before launch the final questionnaire, a pre-test was done with 19 participants. This pre-test is similar to the final questionnaire, it tested if the participants could understand the structure and all the items and asked for the suggestions from them. Then the final version of questionnaire was developed and finished based on the comments. Regarding the pre-test, two participants are not TikTok users, but since pre-test didn't choose a filter question, so even they answered "No" on question "Do you use TikTok?" they still had to finish all the questions. Therefore, based on the comments, the only question that needs to be developed was the filter question.

5.1 Characteristics and Use behavior

The first part of the online questionnaire consisted of six questions to understand the background of all the participants. The first five questions collect demographic information from the participants and the 6th question is the filter question. These six questions were answered by 259 valid participants in total, and the following table will present the result of it.

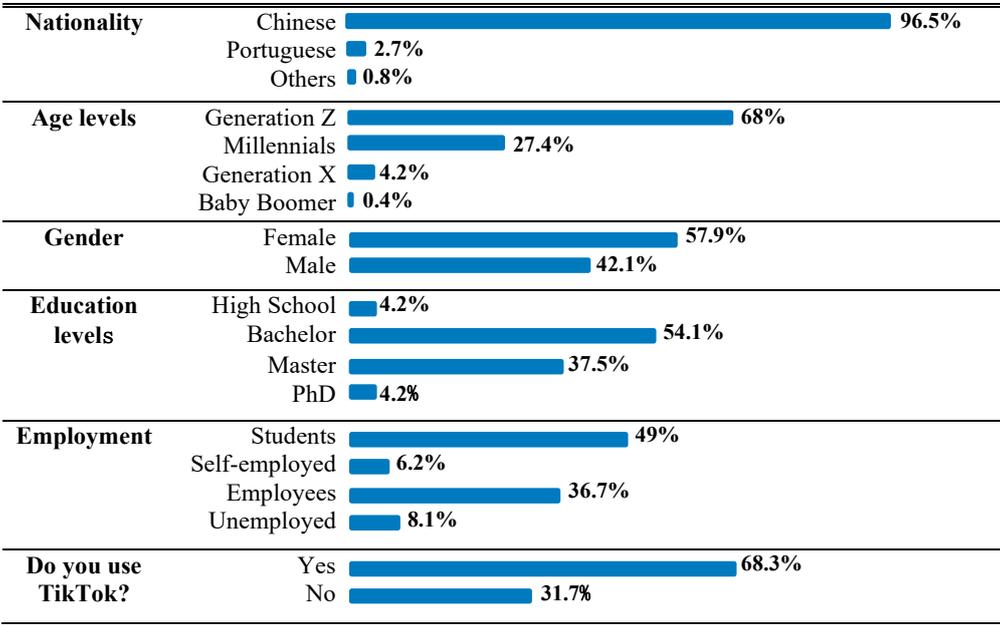


Figure 5.1: Profile of participants

Source: Own elaboration from SPSS

After the filter question, the total valid participants are 177 as said before. They were asked about their use of TikTok and their frequency of using TikTok. These two questions will be presented by the following one table and a pie chart.

Why do you use TikTok?		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
Using TikTok	Chat with Friends	54	12.8%	30.5%
	Informed about Travel Ideas	110	26.1%	62.1%
	Informed about World News	108	25.6%	61.0%
	Watch Videos about Food and Pets	123	29.1%	69.5%
	Other	27	6.4%	15.3%
Total		422	100.0%	238.4%

Table 5. 1: Participants' reasons of using TikTok

Source: Own elaboration from SPSS

The main reasons of using TikTok, visible in Table 1, are 'to watch videos about foods and pets' (69.5%), 'to get information about travel ideas' (62.1%) or even 'to get information about World news' (61%).

The majority of the respondents (59.4%) use TikTok everyday (Figure 3). Only 7.3% of them use TikTok once a week.

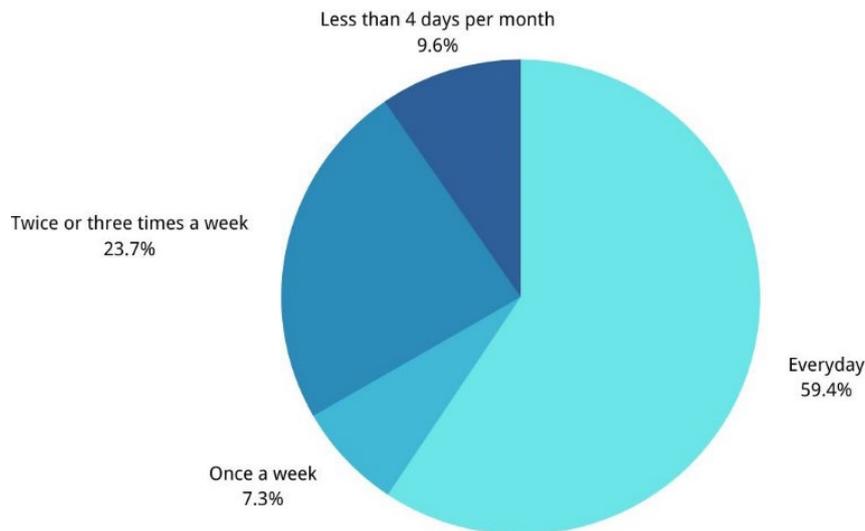


Figure 5.2- Participants' frequencies of using TikTok

Source: Own elaboration from SPSS

5.2 Factor analysis

The exploratory factor analysis conducted to reduce the dimensionality of the original variables related to the seven instruments was used to set the principal components analysis (PCA). The extracted components of each instrument will be used as predictors for the Multiple linear regression model.

5.2.1 Trust on TikTok

According to the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin, the variables are correlated in the sample ($KMO = 0.775$) and the Bartlett's test of sphericity ($\chi^2_{(6)} = 319.851; Sig < 0.001$) shows that the variables are correlated in the population. Thus, the data are suitable for PCA analysis. Finally, the following component matrix shows that the instrument is unidimensional, so only one component was extracted.

	Component 1
I trust TikTok as a social media brand	.877
I have confidence on TikTok as a social media brand	.820
TikTok never disappoint me as a social media brand	.842
I trust the tourism relevant videos on TikTok	.798
Cumulative % of total variance	69.713

Table 5. 2: Extracted component for the instrument Trust on TikTok

Source: Own elaboration from SPSS

5.2.2 The instrument 'Travel influencer on TikTok'

For the instrument Travel influencer on TikTok, the exploratory factor analysis shows that the adequacy of the data to the PCA analysis is validated ($KMO = 0.735; \chi^2_{(3)} = 235,732; Sig < 0.001$). Then the following component matrix shows that only 1 component was extracted.

	Component 1
I desire to visit the destination places recommended by travel influencer on TikTok	.885
I am willing to buy touristic products from a destination if recommended by travel influencer on TikTok	.885
I think travel influencers on TikTok are overall reliable	.876
Cumulative % of total variance	77.850

Table 5. 3: Extracted component for the instrument Travel influencer on TikTok

Source: Own elaboration from SPSS

5.2.3 The instrument 'Types of travel videos on TikTok'

For the instrument Type of Travel videos on TikTok, according to KMO coefficient equal to 0.820 and the Bartlett's test of sphericity ($\chi^2_{(3)} = 288.187; Sig < 0.001$), the variables are correlated in the sample and in the population, respectively.

An orthogonal rotation, varimax, was imposed, and four components were extracted that explain about 72% of the cumulative total variance.

	Component
	1
Delicacy (Food & restaurants)	.808
City architecture	.783
Natural Scenery	.769
Historical Allusions	.753
Experience items (local custom experiences, such as dancing in Hawaiian grass skirts)	.710

Table 5. 4: Extracted components for the instrument Travel influencer on TikTok

Source: Own elaboration from SPSS

5.2.4 The instrument ‘Main information sources to get information’

The instrument ‘Main information sources to get information’ is analyzed from two sets of items measured by an ordinal scale of agreement of items that are related to traditional media such as ‘I usually see tourism information through traditional media (TV, newspaper, magazines, etc.)’ and items that are related to social media such as ‘I usually see tourism information through social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and TikTok, etc.)’.

5.2.5 Travel Risk perceptions

The items associated to travel risk perceptions are very different from each other. Thus, it is not expected that this instrument will be unidimensional. In the attempt to reduce the dimensionality of the input variables, it is also performed an exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation. The adequacy measures allow to use this technic ($KMO = 0.851; \chi^2_{(21)} = 879.677; Sig < 0.001$). Three components can be extracted, explaining 87.02% of the total cumulative variance, and are named as Travel risks (TR) from common problems, TR from cultural and financial problems, and TR from accidental problems.

	Component		
	1	2	3
Political stability at a destination	.925	.152	.167
Security (safety) at the destination	.906	.185	.197
Health problem (like flu or other infectious diseases)	.877	.216	.248
Psychological problem (like a high probability of occurring a terrorist attack)	.627	.172	.609
Cultural differences	.183	.911	.111
Financial problem (like exchange rate issues)	.191	.819	.335
Airplane hijacking or other accidents	.238	.313	.876
Cumulative % of total variance	42.375	24.757	19.888

Table 5. 5: Extracted components from the instrument Travel risks perceptions

The first model will consider the items are going to be analyzed as if they belong to the same set, and the second model with the items will consider these three components.

5.2.6 Destination decision

The instrument destination decision was also analyzed using an exploratory factor analysis. According to the KMO and Bartlett's test of sphericity ($KMO = 0.713; \chi^2_{(3)} = 230.741; Sig < 0.001$) allows the use of the PCA analysis. Just one component is extracted that explain 76.833% of the total variance.

	Component 1
I am likely to consider travel experience on TikTok when making my travel decision	.906
I am willing to change existing travel plans because of some posts on TikTok	.873
My final decision relating to booking a trip or to buy touristic products because of the TikTok	.850

Table 5. 6: for the instrument Destination decision

Source: Own elaboration from SPSS

5.3 Multiple linear regression

The Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the bootstrapping technique is chosen to estimate the relationship between the constructs from the software SmartPLS (Ringle et al., 2015), version 4, using Process. The PLS is adequate when the sample size is small (Hwang et al., 2010). It relies on a nonparametric bootstrap procedure (Davison and Hinkley, 1997) to test if the estimated path coefficients are significant (Hair et al., 2017). The PLS-SEM algorithm uses a maximum number of iterations equal to 3000 and the stop criterion is set at 10^{-7} ; to take a decision about a significance of the estimates, 5000 samples are generated, and a two-tailed test is used.

5.3.1 Estimations for Model 1

Model 1 visualized from Figure 3 is going to be estimated. From table 6, several conclusions can be made:

	Direct effects	P values	Total effects	P values
Information Traditional media -> Destination decision	0.210	0.001	0.212	0.001
Information Traditional media -> Travel risks perceptions	0.027	0.751	0.027	0.751
Information source from Mass media -> Destination decision	0.217	0.017	0.220	0.017
Information source from Mass media -> Travel risks perceptions	0.048	0.675	0.048	0.675
Travel Influencer -> Destination decision	0.196	0.010	0.190	0.012
Travel Influencer -> Travel risks perceptions	-0.089	0.381	-0.089	0.381
Travel risks perceptions -> Destination decision	0.069	0.113	0.069	0.113
Trust -> Destination decision	0.196	0.010	0.206	0.008
Trust -> Travel risks perceptions	0.137	0.156	0.137	0.156
Types of travel videos -> Destination decision	0.215	0.050	0.222	0.041
Types of travel videos -> Travel risks perceptions	0.111	0.344	0.111	0.344

Table 5. 7: Estimated coefficients for Model 1

Source: Smart PLS elaboration

- Trust on TikTok explains Destination decision ($\hat{\beta} = 0.196; Sig = 0.010$)
- Travel Influencer explains Destination decision ($\hat{\beta} = 0.196; Sig = 0.010$)
- Types of travel videos seen on TikTok explain Destination decision ($\hat{\beta} = 0.215; Sig = 0.050$)
- Information sources from Traditional media explains Destination decision ($\hat{\beta} = 0.210; Sig = 0.001$)
- Information sources from social media explains Destination decision ($\hat{\beta} = 0.217; Sig = 0.017$)

However, Travel risks perceptions is not a mediator between the independent variables and the dependent variable. The model's quality is shown in the next table. About 51.1% of the variations is explained by the estimated model after correcting the number of independent variables and the sample size.

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Destinations	0.518	0.511

Table 5. 8: Model's quality for Model 1

Source: Smart PLS elaboration

The last table shows the collinearity diagnostics in order to analyze if the independent variables are correlated or not. The independent variables should not be correlated, and it is one of the assumptions of the linear multiple regression model. The decision is made according to the coefficient Variance Inflation Factor that relates to the model's R^2 between an independent variable (treated as dependent) and the other independent variables. According to Sheather

(2009), values greater than 5 indicate the potential presence of multicollinearity problem. Thus, the assumption of absence of multicollinearity is validated.

	Destinations	Travel risks
Travel Influencer	2.598	2.589
Travel risks	1.032	
Travel videos about culture	2.202	2.193
Trust	2.709	2.679

Table 5. 9: Collinearity diagnostics for Model 1

Source: Smart PLS elaboration

5.3.2 Results of the estimations for Model 1

From the estimations and as a summary, the next figure identifies the significant relationships between all the variables.

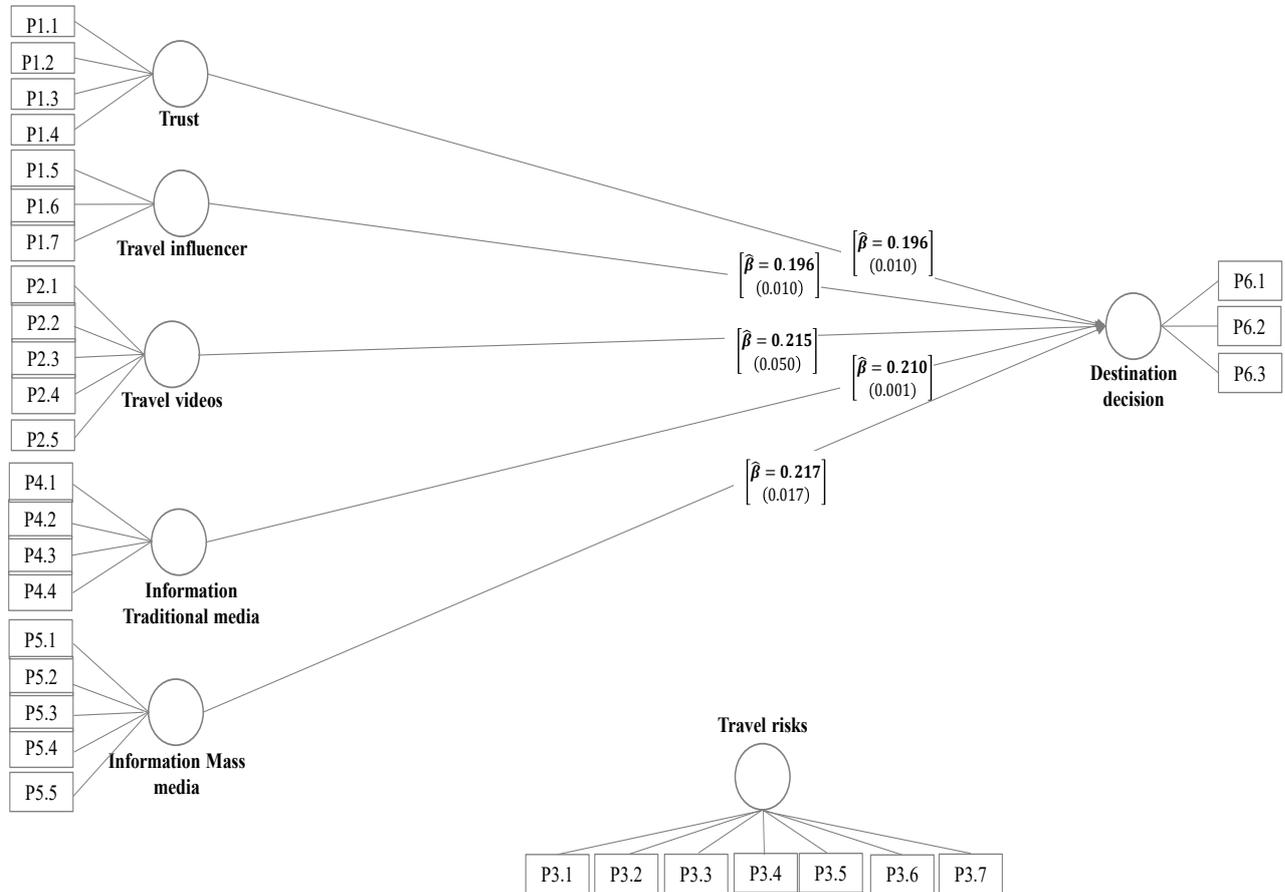


Figure 5.3– Significant relationships between variables in Model 1

5.3.3 Estimations for Model 2

Model 2, visualized from Figure 7, is going to be estimated. From table 6, several conclusions can be made:

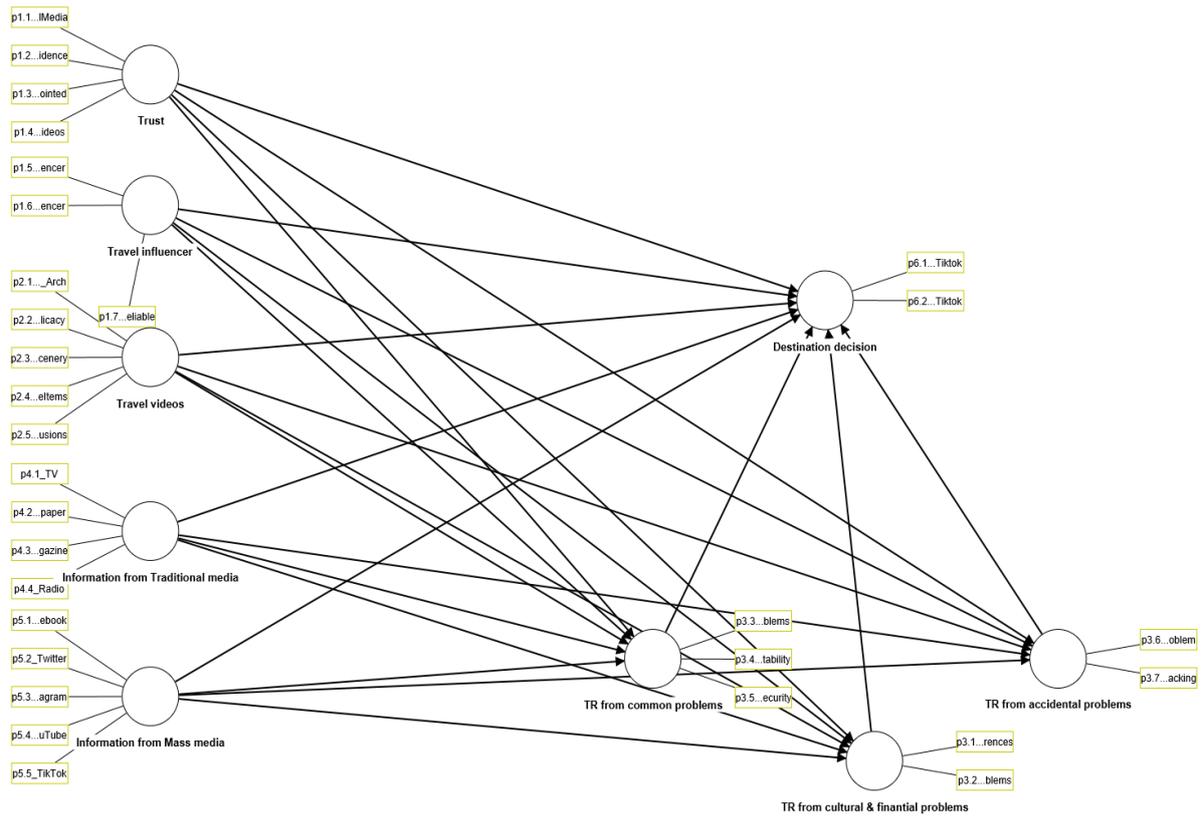


Figure 5.4– Model 2

	Direct effects	P values	Total effects	P values
Information from Mass media -> Destination decision	0.230	0.021	0.247	0.012
Information from Mass media -> TR from accidental problems	0.126	0.351	0.126	0.351
Information from Mass media -> TR from common problems	0.004	0.974	0.004	0.974
Information from Mass media -> TR from cultural & financial problems	0.026	0.848	0.026	0.848
Information from Traditional media -> Destination decision	0.163	0.020	0.176	0.008
Information from Traditional media -> TR from accidental problems	0.007	0.952	0.007	0.952
Information from Traditional media -> TR from common problems	-0.097	0.307	-0.097	0.307
Information from Traditional media -> TR from cultural & financial problems	0.237	0.022	0.237	0.022
TR from accidental problems -> Destination decision	0.137	0.026	0.137	0.026
TR from common problems -> Destination decision	-0.118	0.042	-0.118	0.042
TR from cultural & financial problems -> Destination decision	0.006	0.908	0.006	0.908
Travel influencer -> Destination decision	0.195	0.040	0.229	0.013
Travel influencer -> TR from accidental problems	0.060	0.702	0.060	0.702
Travel influencer -> TR from common problems	-0.223	0.074	-0.223	0.074
Travel influencer -> TR from cultural & financial problems	-0.124	0.396	-0.124	0.396
Types of travel videos -> Destination decision	0.160	0.194	0.106	0.371
Types of travel videos -> TR from accidental problems	-0.064	0.693	-0.064	0.693
Types of travel videos -> TR from common problems	0.369	0.032	0.369	0.032
Travel videos -> TR from cultural & financial problems	-0.170	0.282	-0.170	0.282
Trust -> Destination decision	0.274	0.011	0.284	0.009
Trust -> TR from accidental problems	0.133	0.449	0.133	0.449
Trust -> TR from common problems	0.093	0.473	0.093	0.473
Trust -> TR from cultural & financial problems	0.355	0.027	0.355	0.027

Table 5. 10: Estimations for Model 2

Destination decision is explained by the variables:

- Main source of information from mass media ($\hat{\beta} = 0.230; Sig = 0.021$)
- Main source of information from traditional ($\hat{\beta} = 0.163; Sig = 0.020$)
- Travel influencer ($\hat{\beta} = 0.195; Sig = 0.040$)
- Trust in TikTok ($\hat{\beta} = 0.274; Sig = 0.011$)

Travel risks from cultural and financial problems are explained by the variables:

- Main source traditional media ($\hat{\beta} = 0.237; Sig = 0.026$)
- Trust in TikTok ($\hat{\beta} = 0.355; Sig = 0.027$);

Travel risks from cultural and financial problems do not explain Destination decision ($\hat{\beta} = 0.006; Sig = 0.908$), meaning that it cannot be a mediator.

- Travel risks from common problems is explained by Types of travel videos seen on TikTok ($\hat{\beta} = 0.369; Sig = 0.032$) and explains Destination decision ($\hat{\beta} = -0.118; Sig = 0.042$). However, Types of travel videos do not explain Destination decision ($\hat{\beta} = 0.160; Sig = 0.194$), meaning that Travel risks from common problems cannot be a mediator.

Travel risks from accidental problems explain Destination decision ($\hat{\beta} = 0.137; Sig = 0.026$). But, because none of the independent variable, it cannot be a mediator.

The model's quality improved from Model to Model 2 as shown in the next table. About 61% of the variations is explained by the estimated model after correcting the number of independent variables and the sample size.

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Destinations	0.617	0.605

Table 5. 11: Model's quality of Model 2

Source: SmartPLS elaboration

The assumption of absence of multicollinearity is also validated.

	Destination decision	Travel risks (1)	Travel risks (2)	Travel risks (3)
Information from Mass media	1.889		1.870	
Information from Traditional media	1.675		1.573	
TR from accidental problems	2.279			
TR from common problems	2.051			
TR from cultural & financial problems	1.606			
Travel influencer	2.880		2.757	
Travel videos	2.499		2.309	
Trust	2.787		2.691	

Notes: (1) Travel risks from accidental problems; (2) Travel risks from common problems; (3) Travel risks from cultural & financial problems.

Table 5. 12: Collinearity diagnostics

Source: SmartPLS elaboration

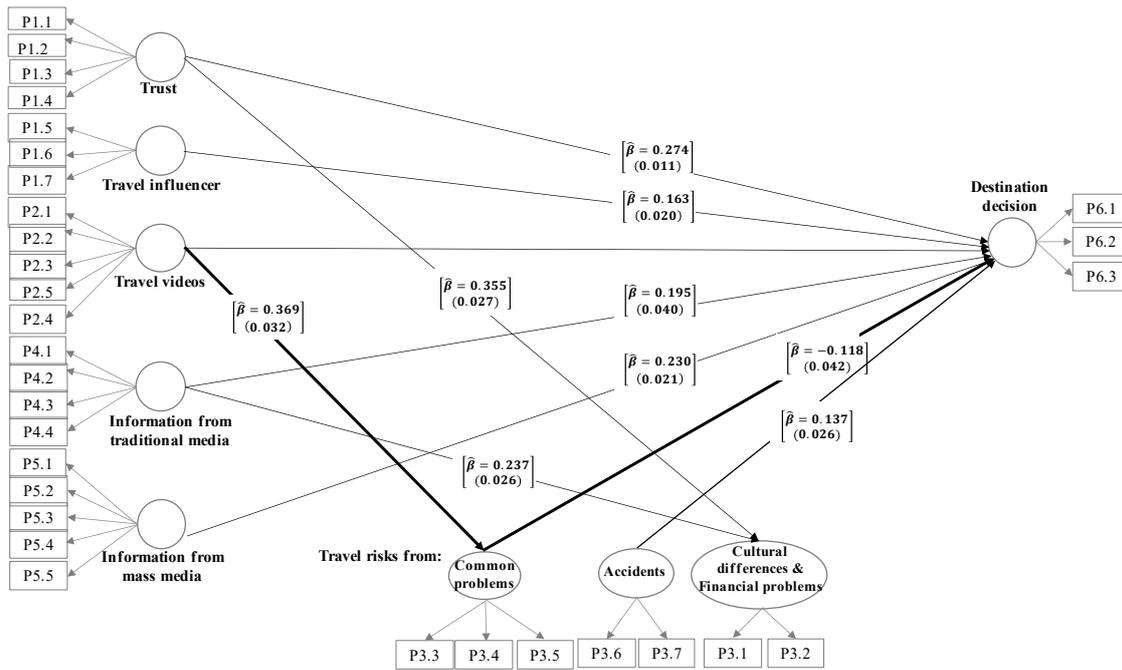


Figure 5.5- Significant relationships between variables in Model 2

5.3.4 Validation of the hypotheses

Lastly, according to Chapter 3.1, five potential constructs which are potential significant predictors for Destination decision and one or three mediator(s) for Model 1 and Model 2 was(were) tested. The following table listed all the hypotheses and their validations.

Hypotheses	Validation	
	Model 1	Model 2
H1: Trust on TikTok is positively related with the destination decision	Validated	Validated
H2: Travel influencer on TikTok is positively related with the destination decision	Validated	Validated
H3: Types of travel videos on TikTok is positively related with the destination decision	Validated	Not validated
H4a: Risk perception is negatively related with the destination decision	Not validated	Validated for travel risks from common problems
H4b: Risk perception is a potential mediator in this model	Not validated	Not validated
H5a: The main information source from Traditional media is positively related with the destination decision	Validated	Validated
H5b: The main information sources from social media is positively related with the destination decision	Validated	Validated

Table 5. 13: Hypotheses' Validation for Models 1 and 2

Source: Own elaboration

5.4 Discussion

This chapter will discuss the results of the study, dealing independently with all the predictors that have explanatory power for the outcome, destination decision.

As a theoretical contribution, the predictors we detected can all explain the independent variable destination decision. However, when testing the mediating effects between dependent variable and independent variables, with risk perception as mediator, the result showed that risk perception as a mediator was not accepted. Travel risks included travel accidents, cultural, financial, health, political, social, and psychological. Here is this case, only travel risk from accidents explain destination decision, and travel risks from other factors are related with trust on TikTok and Travel influencers on TikTok. Comparing with the research from Reisinger and Mavondo (2005), the authors collected the data especially from Australia (include local Australian and travelers in Australia), so the data base is different from this study, which almost all respondents are from China. Therefore, the data base with different cultural background will affect the results. People with different cultural background will lead them thinking in different dimensions even they are facing the same problem, so the result of this research can be part of contribute that helps risk perception to explain destination decision.

Then, the rest of predictors will be discussed for Model 2. First, Trust on TikTok is positively related with destination decision. Based on Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001)'s brand trust scale, Zhang et al. (2022) studied which factors can have impact on social media brand trust. And this study based on the explanation of social media brand trust from Zhang et al. (2022), discover a specific social media brand, TikTok's impact on destination decision. Destination decision requires large amount of information from social media, and trust is closely related with informative value (Zhang et al., 2022). Thus, once people trust the information on a social media brand, they will trust the brand itself and therefore let it influence their decision.

Second, Travel influencers on TikTok is positively related with destination decision. Pop et al. (2021) found that trust in the content created by SMIs (Social Media Influencers) has a significant positive effect on the travel desire of young customers, the evaluation of alternatives, and the purchase of tourist products. What's more, Pop et al. (2021) suggested that SMI trust has a positive impact on consumer decision-making. Thus, this study adapted the result from Pop et al. (2021) and make SMI become specific SMI on a social media brand TikTok. It also shows that SMIs on TikTok positively explains the destination decision. Thus, it is obvious to see that SMIs is effective factor when discussing destination decision.

Third, Type of travel videos on TikTok is not positively related with destination decision. However, according to the research of Chenchen et al. (2020), it found that tourists' perception of destination and travel intention are affected by short video marketing, and travel videos about "City Architecture" on TikTok have the most influence of marketing types on tourists' willingness to travel. Here is this study, it has a different result. Travel videos on TikTok about "Delicacy" (Food & Restaurants) have the most influence on Chinese young adult's travel intention but it is not affective enough to influence their destination decision. Chenchen et al. (2020) collected the data especially from a city called Chengdu in China without mentioning the age of the participants, and this study collected data from all over China, mainly the Generation Z. Therefore, this difference shows that even in the same country, people from different cities also have different perceptions and preferences. Whether 'Types of travel videos on TikTok' can explain destination decision still needs more specific study with targeted ages, cities and countries.

Lastly, the main information sources used to get information is positively related with destination decision. Regarding Koo et al. (2016), both traditional media and social media are positively related with people's desire to travel and destination content gratification. Destination content gratification is positively related with people's desire to travel and intention to travel to a destination. Here in this study, it also got the same result, both traditional and social media positively explain the destination decision and social media has more influence than traditional media for Chinese people.

Thus, we can conclude that determinants of TikTok's influences on destination decision are Trust on TikTok, Travel influencers on TikTok, Risk perception regarding travel accidents and the main information sources from traditional media and social media used to get information.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Theoretical contributions

The aim of this work is to detect TikTok's impact on destination decision and some components of TikTok's impact.

In the literature review, except Chenchen et al. (2020) studied TikTok as a social media brand and a marketing tool nowadays, other studies only focus on the general social medias and their impact. However short videos as a crucial and trendy way for people to receive information in their fragmentation time since the beginning of the pandemic is worth studying. Tourism as the most damaged industry in this pandemic it's meaningful to connect it with short videos to see how people can make use of short videos to help tourism industry recovery. This study only tested some of the important components of TikTok (Short video app) based on the previous studies and didn't find a mediator for the constructed model. Thus, more studies need to be done.

This study findings contribute to the research of tourism and social media in showing the influence of the components of TikTok on tourism destination choice. For short videos app like TikTok, trust is very important, like trust on TikTok and on its influencers. What's more, and since the majority of the respondents are Chinese, so the most favorable travel videos that can affect people's travel decision is different from the research of Reisinger and Mavondo (2005). Because of the cultural differences, the most favorable travel videos on TikTok for Chinese are "Delicacy" not "City architecture" compare with Reisinger and Mavondo (2005). Hence, food and restaurant can be a factor to affect Chinese people's travel decision. However, maybe change a respondent's base with people from other nations will have totally different results. It is also interesting to be studied in the future research.

6.2 Managerial and implication

This research is also dedicated to providing some practical suggestions for TikTok and marketers and help them to see the power of short videos and make use of it. This chapter will discuss each component one by one as Chapter 5.4 from a practical perspective.

Trust is the core of a social media brand like TikTok. It is closely related with a brand's reputation and awareness. However, nothing is perfect in this world, what we can do is to reduce imperfection. TikTok nowadays has already applied the real name authentication, which to a certain extent ensures the possibility of people telling the truth on the platform. To further

strengthen the guarantee of integrity, this study suggests TikTok enhance the review of content in order to reduce the possibility of advertising fake travel scenes. A social media called “The red book” (小红书) in China has been criticized a lot because of the over-retouching of photos and videos of the tourism destination. People show only a small part of the travel destination and over-retouching it just to boost likes and favorites, even the rest part of the travel destination is wasteland. TikTok should take this as a warning and introduce a punishment mechanism for tourism publicity falsification. For example, people cannot falsely advertise a tourist destination more than 3 times on TikTok. The first time they will receive a warning, the second time their accounts will be blocked for 1 month and the third time their accounts will be cancelled forever.

Then regarding the travel influencers on TikTok, they also need to follow this punishment mechanism. What’s more, for the tourist products they promote through TikTok, they should apply to TikTok first and report the sources of those products, they can only promote the tourism products after getting the permission from TikTok’s administrators.

About type of travel videos on TikTok, TikTok should make good use of its big data technique and pinpoint the preferences of people in each region for travel videos. For attractions in popular tourist cities, a ranking based on their related videos’ traffic can be listed for tourists as a reference.

Risk perception is quite important nowadays because of the pandemic. Regarding the result of the questionnaire, the mean of “I will visit a tourist destination that has/had fewer Covid-19 patients during the pandemic” is 5.88/7, and the mean of “I care more about the hygiene problem nowadays than with before” is 5.7/7 (Appendix 12). Therefore, TikTok can cooperate with local health departments to suggest the number of covid cases in the area and the corresponding epidemic prevention policy like if PCR test is needed and if tourists need to provide vaccination certificate (European areas) and green code (China) under the relevant travel videos. What’s more, regarding other risks like cultural, financial, health, political, social, psychological, airplane hijacking and other accidents, if TikTok’s big data detected a person is currently watching a lot of travel videos about a city, it can recommend other news videos about that city for that person to perceive other risks.

Lastly, regarding the main information sources to get information, this study detected that both traditional and social medias explain destination decision. If marketers want to promote destinations, they can apply integrated marketing communication strategy, let target customer hear them everywhere both social media like TikTok, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook, and traditional media like radio, TV, newspaper, and magazine, subliminally influence people's destination decisions.

6.3 Limitations and suggestions for future research

Every study has limitation, so this chapter will explain the limitation of this study. These limitations may show future research paths and help other researchers with their difficulties.

The first limitation is the determinants. There must be some determinants missing, so new determinants for destination decision can be explored, more relevant and important factors can be detected. What's more, this study didn't find any mediators and moderators, to continue improve this model, mediators need to be found in the future study.

Then, regarding the data collection, the biggest limitation is respondents' nationality, this study was supposed to collect data from different countries and make comparison of them. However, since TikTok is famous in China and the US, Portuguese users are still developing and it's hard for researcher to reach people from the US, the 259 respondents in this study are almost all Chinese, except 7 from Portugal, 1 from the US and 1 from Brazil. From this result, it's easy to see that language can also be a limitation. If a study wants to reach more people from non-English speaking countries, using local languages to make the questionnaire is very important. Moreover, in the future study, if conditions allow, researchers can try to cooperate with TikTok so that they can reach the target group without having any invalidated results.

Besides, a new trendy determinant can be study in the future study, it's "Technologies applied on TikTok". Since TikTok is a short video platform, it has already tried to apply new technologies like AI, AR and VR in order to enhance users' sense of engagement and interaction. Especially for tourism, VR tour is a new trend nowadays, it may help marketers better promote the destination. Therefore, if TikTok or social medias empowered by new technologies will have more impact on destination decision is worth studying.

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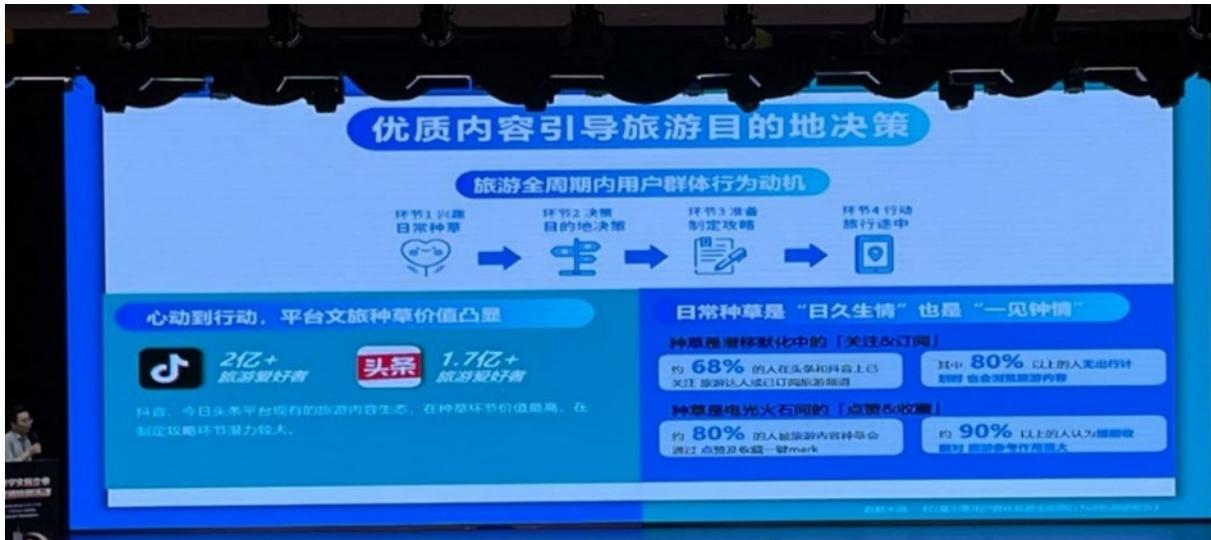
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8. Appendices

A. ByteDance Meeting photo 1



B. ByteDance Meeting photo 2



C. Table to support the Hypotheses:

Variables	Reference	Origin items	Measurement	Adapted items
Trust on TikTok (TOT)	Zhang et al. (2022)	1. I trust this SM brand 2. I have confidence on this SM brand 3. This SM brand never disappoints me	Based on Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001)'s brand trust scale, Zhang et al. (2022) measured them on a 7-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree)	TOT1. I trust TikTok TOT2. I have confidence on TikTok TOT3. TikTok never disappoints me TOT4. I trust the tourism relevant videos on TikTok (Self-develop based on Zhang et al. (2022))
Travel influencer on TikTok	Pop et al. (2021)	1. Desire to visit the destination recommended by SMI 2. Willingness to buy the tourist product recommended by SMI. 3. SMI is reliable	7-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree)	TIT1: Desire to visit the destination recommended by travel influencer on TikTok TIT2: Willingness to buy the tourist product recommended by travel influencer on TikTok TIT3: I think travel influencer on TikTok is overall reliable
Type of travel videos on TikTok	Chenchen et al. (2020)	1. City Architecture 2. Delicacy 3. Natural Scenery 4. Experience items 5. Historical Allusions	Obtained the influence of five types of vibrato short video content types on tourists' travel wishes	TV1. City Architecture TV2. Delicacy TV3. Natural Scenery TV4. Experience items TV5. Historical Allusions
Risk perceived	Wachyuni and Kusumaningrum (2020)	1. I will visit a tourist destination that has fewer COVID-19 patients during the pandemic	7-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree)	RP1. I will visit a tourist destination that has fewer COVID-19 patients during the pandemic
	Reisinger and Mavondo (2005)	1. Cultural 2. equipment/functional 3. financial 4. health 5. physical 6. political 7. psychological 8. satisfaction 9. social 10. airplane hijacking 11. bomb explosion 12. biochemical attack 13. time	Perception of travel risk (7-point scale, 1=none, 7= very high)	RP1. Cultural RP2. Financial RP3. Health RP4. political RP5. social RP6. psychological RP7. airplane hijacking
The main information sources used to get information	Koo et al.(2016)	Mass Media: 1. I saw PSY's "Gangnam Style" through traditional media (TV, newspapers, magazines, etc.) 2. I receive "Korean Music Content" through traditional media 3. I receive "Korean Drama Content" through traditional media	Partial least squares (PLS) was performed using Smart PLS 2.0 in this study.	MIS1. I saw tourism infos through traditional media (TV, newspaper, magazines, etc.) MIS2. I saw tourism infos through social media (Facebook, Twitter, Youtube and TikTok, etc.)
		Social Media: 1. I saw PSY's "Gangnam Style" through social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.) 2. I receive "Korean Music Content" through social media 3. I receive "Korean Drama Content" through social media	Partial least squares (PLS) was performed using Smart PLS 2.0 in this study.	
Destination decision	Pop et al. (2021)	1. Likely to consider SMI's travel experience when making my travel decision 2. When I'm making a travel-related decisions, I will take suggestion from digital influencers 3. Final decision relating to booking a trip or tourist products because of the SMI. 4. Change existing travel plans because of the SMI	7-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree)	D1: Likely to consider travel experience on TikTok when making my travel decision D2: Final decision relating to booking a trip or tourist products because of the TikToker D3: Change existing travel plans because of some posts on TikTok

D. Questionnaire

Background questions:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. What is your nationality? | China
Portugal |
| 2. What is your age? | (Open to answer) |
| 3. What is your gender? | Female
Male |
| 4. What is your educational level? | High school
Bachelor
Master
PhD |
| 5. What is your employment status? | Students
Self-employed
Employees
Unemployed |
| 6. Do you use TikTok? | |

Questions after the filter question:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 7. Why do you use TikTok? | To chat with friends
To be informed about travel ideas (Scenes, foods etc.)
To be informed about world news
Watch videos about foods and pets |
| 8. Your frequency of using TikTok? | Every day
Once a week
Twice or 3 times a week
Less than 4 days a week |

Trust on TikTok:	“1=Strongly disagree, 7= Strongly agree”
I trust TikTok as a social media brand	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
I have confidence on TikTok as a social media brand	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
TikTok never disappoint me as a social media brand	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
I trust the tourism relevant videos on TikTok	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Travel influencer on TikTok:	
I desire to visit the destination places recommended by travel influencer on TikTok	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
I am willing to buy the touristic products from a destination recommended by travel influencer on TikTok	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
I think travel influencers on TikTok are overall reliable	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Type of travel videos on TikTok:	“1= influence not at all, 7= influence a lot”
City architecture	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Delicacy (Food & restaurants)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Natural Scenery	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Experience items (Local custom experiences, such as dancing in Hawaiian grass skirts)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Historical Allusions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Risk perception:	“1= None, 7= Very High”
Cultural differences	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Financial problem like exchange rate issues	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Health problem like flu or other infectious diseases	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Political stability in a destination	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Social security in a destination	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Psychological problem like high probability of a terrorist attack happens	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Airplane hijacking or other accidents	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
The main information sources used to get information	“1=Strongly disagree, 7= Strongly agree”
I usually see tourism information through traditional media (TV, newspaper, magazines, etc.)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
I usually see tourism information through social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and TikTok, etc.)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Destination decision:	
I am likely to consider travel experience on TikTok when making my travel decision	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
My final decision relating to booking a trip or tourist products because of the TikTok	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
It’s possible for me to change existing travel plans because of some posts on TikTok	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Other DIY questions to have a better understanding of the participants:

	“ 1= Strongly disagree, 7= Strongly agree”
I will visit a tourist destination that has/had fewer Covid-19 patients during the pandemic	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
I care more about the hygiene problem nowadays comparing with before	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Information from traditional media can help me better to perceive risk from destination:	
TV	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Newspaper	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Magazine	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Radio	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
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Information from social media can help me better to perceive risk from destination:
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Facebook	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
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Twitter	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
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Instagram	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
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YouTube	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
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TikTok	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
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