UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN FINLAND

Faculty of Social Sciences and Business Studies

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"BEING ABLE TO BE WHO I TRULY AM, THAT IS THE MOST FREEING FEELING EVER.": EXPERIENCES OF TRAVEL BEHAVIOR BY TRANSGENDER INDIVIDUALS

Master's Thesis

Tourism Marketing and Management

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Abstract

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Abstract

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) tourism is a growing business in the travel sector. However, despite the increasingly understanding atmosphere of these individuals, there are still significant barriers regarding their mobility, as many countries are still not accepting of LGBT people. Although it may be regarded that all of the segments within the umbrella of LGBT face these challenges when it comes to travel, there is a sub-segment within the bigger picture that may face more challenges than others: transgender individuals.

The purpose of this study was to examine the travel behavior of transgender individuals. The study was conducted using inductive approach, as the previous research on the matter is very limited. Based on the data analysis, as well as the importance of the subject to transgender experience, the concept of identity, and further self-concept and personality, regarding consumer behavior were chosen to pose as the theoretical foundation of this study. The theoretical foundation also included exploration of transgender experience and gender reformation, and the limited research found on transgender people's perspectives towards traveling. The data was approached with two analysis methods: qualitative content analysis (QCA) and narrative analysis. After the initial QCA, the perspective of identity and personality were introduced to the study. From this perspective, especially Stanley Plog's (1974; 2001) model of the psycho-allocentric traveler was widely used to further examine the behavioral aspect of transgender traveler. The data collection took place in June-July 2020. All together 12 narratives were submitted for the study, all of which were examined to be in good quality and suitable for the study.

The findings of this study indicate similar aspects to transgender traveling as Olson and Reddy-Best's (2019) study of transgender individual's experiences of travel. Transgender individuals may experience heightened feelings of anxiety and stress because of their gender background and the challenges it poses. Important factors in transgender travel behavior include safety and security from various perspectives, as well as the means of identity.

Key words

transgender, LGBT tourism, travel/tourist behavior, consumer behavior, identity, personality

Tiivistelmä

ITÄ-SUOMEN YLIOPISTO

Tiedekunta	Yksikö
Yhteiskuntatieteiden ja kauppatieteiden tiedekunta	**Kauppatieteiden laitos**
Tekijä	Ohjaaja
Tuuli Pulkkinen	**Raija Komppula**
Työn nimi	
"Se, että voit esittäytyä juuri sinä henkilö kuin olet, on vapauttavin tunne, mitä tiedän": transsukupuolisten kokemuksia matkailukäyttäytymisestä	

Pääaine	Työn laji	Aika	Sivuja
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Tiivistelmä

Homo, lesbo, biseksuaali ja transsukupuolisten matkustaminen (HLBT, englanniksi LGBT) on kasvava segmentti matkailun alalla. Kuitenkin, vaikka maailman kokonaisvaltaisesti ymmärtäväinen ilmapiiri HLBT ihmisiä kohtaan on jatkuvasti kasvamassa, kohtaa tämä matkailijaryhmä esteitä matkustaessaan, sillä monissa maissa HLBT henkilöitä ei edelleenkään hyväksytä. Vaikka kaikki HLBT henkilöt kohtaavatkin näitä haasteita matkailun saralla, on yksi asiakasryhmä HLBT sateenvarjon alla, joka voi kohdata enemmän ongelmia kuin muut: transsukupuoliset henkilöt.

Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoituksena oli havainnoida matkailukäyttäytymistä transsukupuolisilla henkilöillä. Tutkimus on toteutettu käyttäen induktiivistä lähestymistapaa, sillä aikaisempaan tutkimusta aiheesta ei ole juurikaan saatavilla. Data analyysin perusteella, sekä aiheen tärkeydestä transsukupuolisten kokemukseen liittyen, identiteetti, ja edelleen minä-käsitys sekä persoonallisuus, kuluttajakäyttäymisen näkökulmasta valittiin tutkimuksen teoreettiseksi pohjaksi. Teoreettiseen pohjaan kuului myös transsukupuolisuuden kokemuksen ja sukupuolen muutoksen havainnointia, sekä katsauksen rajallisiin aikaisempiin tutkimuksiin transsukupuolisten henkilöiden matkailukokemuksista. Dataa lähestyttiin käyttäen kahta eri analysointi menetelmää käyttäen: laadullista aineisto analyysiä ja narratiivista analyysia. Laadullisen aineisto analyysin jälkeen teoreettinen pohja nojautuen identiteettiin ja persoonallisuuteen sisällytettiin tutkimukseen. Tästä näkökulmasta, eritoten Stanley Plogin (1974; 2001) teoriaa psycho- ja allocentrisestä matkailijaprofiilista käytettiin havainnoimaan transsukupuolisen matkailijan käyttäytymisen ulottuvuuksia. Datan keräys tapahtui aikavälillä kesä-heinäkuu 2020. Vastausajan loppuun mennessä tutkimukseen oli palautettu 12 narratiivia, jotka kaikki nähtiin oleellisiksi ja hyväksyttäviksi tarinoiksi tutkimusta varten.

Tutkimuksen tulokset osoittavat samankaltaisuuksia Olson ja Reddy-Bestin (2019) tutkimuksen kanssa, joka käsitteli transsukupuolisten henkilöiden kokemuksia matkailusta. Transsukupuoliset matkailijat saattavat kokea korostettuja ahdistuneisuuden ja stressin tunteita sukupuolitaustaansa liittyen. Tärkeitä vaikuttajia transsukupuolisten matkailukäyttäytymiseen ovat turvallisuus eri näkökulmista, sekä identiteetin ilmentymät.

Avainsanat

transsukupuolinen, HLBT/LGBT matkailu, matkailukäyttäytyminen, kuluttajakäyttäytyminen, identiteetti, persoonallisuus

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

In the changing world, diversity of sexuality and gender have become an increasingly transparent subject of discussion in the developed world. Acceptance, understanding, and research of these minority groups are on the rise and normalizing them as an important part of the society. However, there is still a long way before these people, who are LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender), can walk freely and without fear among the majority groups. There are still plenty of spaces, far away from home as well as in our neighborhoods, where LGBT people feel unsafe and not equals with the sexual and gender majorities. Violence against LGBT people does not only come in impersonal violence manifesting online or another indirect way, but it often presents itself also in physical forms of violence and abuse. In tourism context, several countries also still regard the acts and identities of LGBT people as illegal, meaning that the consumer segment has restricted access to travel. (UNWTO, 2017; IGLTA, 2016; Guaracino & Salvato, 2017; Southall & Fallon, 2011; Marzullo & Libman, 2009; Padilla, Aguila, & Parker, 2007; ETC, 2018). In the tourism industry, the LGBT segment is seen as a growing market, but current research and literature mostly focus on gay and lesbian travelers, leaving for example transgender part of the segment unnoticed. This results in the tourism industry seeking to customize and market products and destinations for gay-lesbian travelers, while the needs and desires of transgender people are widely disregarded or believed to be accommodated by the generalized LGBT market. (Monterrubio, Madera Rodríguez, & Pérez, 2020; Southall & Fallon, 2011).

LGBT tourism has always been around, but it has not always been as visible and transparent as it is today (IGLTA, 2016; UNWTO, 2017). LGBT tourism refers to the development and marketing of tourism products and services that are targeted for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people. It is important to note that even though LGBT spectrum segments are seen as a united group, it still contains several sub-groups that may have different needs and desires when it comes to travel: they are just as diverse segment as the majority of the population. (Guaracino & Salvato, 2017). As research has been focusing mainly on gay and lesbian tourism, LGBT tourism has taken the status of an umbrella term, even though the segment is very diverse and versatile (UNWTO, 2017; Monterrubio, Madera et al., 2020). Because of this, more research is called out for the different segments of LGBT tourism, in order for the tourism world to respond to the demand of the segment

(UNWTO, 2017). This study will concentrate on the transgender segment of LGBT, and it is conducted to explore the segment's travel behavior.

American Psychological Association (APA) defines transgender as being an umbrella term, that includes all the variations of gender, where an individual feels a contradiction between the gender assigned at birth and their gender identity, gender expression, or behavior (2020a). In Finnish, the term "*transhuman"* is the equivalent umbrella term that consists of transgenders and non-binary/non-conforming gender identities. The term transgender in Finnish can be seen more closely to resemble the individuals who feel the contradictory of the gender assigned to them at birth, but still, identify within the binary gender construct as male or female. *Transgender*, however, is not in itself a gender, but rather an experience of oneself in the formation of gender identity. (Trasek Ry, 2020). The terminology will be defined in more detail later in the paper.

Even though transgender rights are increasingly more recognized in the world today, the rights of this minority segment can still be vague and poorly acknowledged (UNWTO, 2017). For example, Finland ranks at 8th place on ILGA's annual benchmarking report of LGBTI legal and policy situation in Europe (ILGA Europe, 2020). Even though this may seem a high and good score, the legal situation for transgender people in Finland is still poor in many perspectives, which also reflects the ILGA's score. Finland, for example, is currently the only Nordic country that required a transgender person to be sterilized or otherwise infertile before being able to change their juridical gender. The law current law also states that the person cannot be married or be in a civil union, they need to be over 18-years old and a permanent resident or citizen in Finland. (Seta, 2019; Trasek Ry, 2020; Finlex, 2002). Especially the sterilization requirement has been recognized as a human rights violation by many different authorities, such as European Court of Human Rights (Brink & Dunne, 2018) and Amnesty International (2019).

The currently enforced law means that a transgender person cannot change their juridical gender, meaning the gender presented in legal documents such as passport, without being sterile. Changing the legal status of gender has been studied to be an important factor in sense of identity recognition, as well as affirmation of citizenship (Couch, Pitts, Croy, Mulcare, & Mitchell, 2008). Missing congruence between a person's identification documents and expressed gender identity may lead to several problems at airports and tourism destinations for transgender individuals (Currah & Mulqueen, 2011; Olson & Reddy-Best, 2019; Monterrubio et al., 2020). Identity, the core of who we

are (Vignoles, Scwartz, & Luyckx, 2011; Baumeister, 1997), hence may have a strong impact on travel behavior of transgender people.

1.2. Objective, research question and positioning of research

The objective of this study was to examine the transgender traveler segment and how travel behavior manifests within the segment. The study was conducted as inductive research, as previous theoretical concepts and literature are limited. This study does not aim for generalized results or to find connections explaining transgender travel behavior, but rather as a qualitative study to explore and understand the phenomena of transgender individuals in tourism setting. Previous literature guiding this study includes for example Olson and Reddy-Best's (2019) qualitative research examining the transgender tourism experience, Moterrubio et al.'s (2020) qualitative research on trans women's travel motivations. As the transformation of identity appears to be a central factor for transgender experience and gender development, the perspective of identity and personality in contexts of consumer behavior was chosen to stand as the theoretical foundation of this study. The positioning of the study is illustrated in Figure 1.
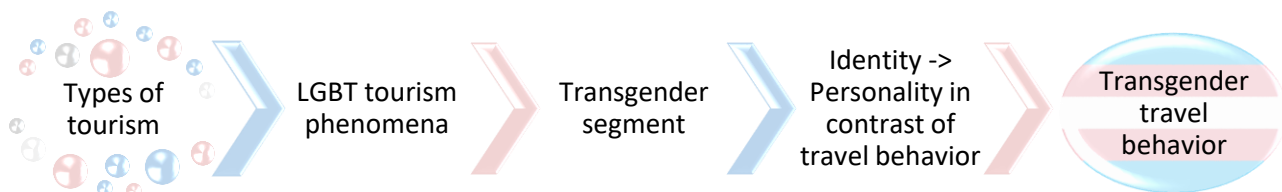
Figure 1. Positioning of the study.

Based on previous literature, the pre-assumption of that *being a transgender individual affects travel behavior* was formatted, and it is based on the limited previous research on transgender individuals. Building on this, the research question for the study has been formatted as *How does being a transgender individual influence travel/tourist behavior?* From the main research question, sub-questions were also formatted, which were edited to be used in the narrative request as well as helping questions for the participants. Sub-questions were:

What type of decisions does a transgender person make in regarding traveling?
How does a transgender person experience/see traveling?

1.3. Approach & Context

The study was approached using qualitative methods, which are generally used in order to gain a deeper understanding of the subject at hand (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). The study aims to examine the topic of transgender travel behavior in an exploratory manner through travel stories of these individuals. As the research was inductive in nature, perspective of identity and personality factors influencing travel behavior were explored as the second part of the theoretical background for the study after the initial data analysis. This was also seen as a fitting perspective to the study regarding the significant relationship of identity transformation and transgender experience.

The study focuses on researching transgender individuals who do not identify with the gender assigned at birth, but do identify with one of the binary genders, hence identify as either male (female-to-male/FTM) or female (male-to-female/MTF) (APA, 2020a; Trasek Ry, 2020). Although the term *transgender* is used as an umbrella term for all the gender identities that do not identify with the gender assigned at birth, including non-binary and genderfluid individuals who do not identify with a specific gender at all (APA, 2020a), in this research whenever the term *transgender* is used, the primary use of it is to mean transgender individuals who still identify within the binary genders, female or male. It is to be noted that the terminology is constantly changing and reshaping as more information and understanding is being formed around the subject (Vincent, 2018): this is the reason, for example, that even though in some cases the term transsexual can be used to describe a transgender person who identifies as the opposite gender from the gender assigned at birth, the term can be regarded as offensive or outdated by some transgender individuals (Trasek Ry, 2020; Vincent, 2018). Because of the outdated meaning of transsexual, as well as the problematic translation of the term in Finnish, the term is tried to be avoided in this paper, however, it is important to understand that these terms also exist and are used in research literature through time.

1.4. Key concepts related to the topic and research

LGBT	LGBT in the shorthand refers to sexual minorities; gay, lesbian, and bisexuals. T, furthermore, refers to transgender, meaning the individuals who do not identify with their gender assigned at birth. (APA, 2020b). LGBT tourism refers to the targeted marketing efforts and specialized products that tourism has to offer for this market segment. LGBT tourism efforts might also refer to the state of

acceptance that companies of the sector have to offer for the segment, for example by marketing that they are a safe company to choose and they welcome LGBT tourists as well. (UNWTO, 2017).

Transgender; transsexual	Transgender is an umbrella term for individuals who feel a contradiction between their gender assigned at birth and the gender identity feel of themselves (APA, 2020a). This means that the umbrella term includes all the individuals who have a contradiction with their gender identity, meaning non-gender-conforming, non-binary individuals as well as individuals who do not identify with the gender assigned at birth but identify as either male or female (Trasek Ry, 2020; Nagoshi & Brzuzy, 2010; Devor, 2004). For the latter, the term transsexual has been used as well, referring to the gender reassignment surgeries (sex change) that these individuals often go through to feel more comfortable in their bodies. In Finnish, the term *transseksuaali* is an incorrect translation for the word *transsexual*, which is outdated and not recommended to be used as the translation would refer to sexuality, which is not the case with these individuals. The term *transseksuaali* is slowly being left to history in Finnish, but still might exist in older literature, for example, laws. (Trasek Ry, 2020).
Transition	In the context of transgender individuals, transitioning refers to the reassignment surgeries, or other medical acts that an individual takes to resemble their gender identity, hence making them more comfortable in their own body. The level of needed transitioning depends on the person and how strong their gender identity expression is; some might be comfortable and happy in their body just after starting hormone treatment, some might need to go as far as the sex change operations where the genitalia is reassigned to identified gender. (Budge, et al., 2013; Erickson-Schroth, 2014, pp. 7-9). The level of transitioning can create uncomfortable situations, as the body of the individual is not necessarily the same as their identification documents indicate (Olson & Reddy-Best, 2019; Currah & Mulqueen, 2011).
Gender dysphoria	Gender dysphoria, also referred to as gender dysphoria syndrome in literature, refers to the state of contradiction between the gender assigned at birth and the gender identity of the individual (Fisk, 1974; Blanchard & Clemmensen, 1987; American Psychiatric Association, 2020). Transgender individuals, especially ones that still identify as one of the binary genders, often experience gender dysphoria as a feeling of disgust or loathing, and being uncomfortable in their bodies because their genitalia or

general appearance does not resemble the gender they identify within. Gender dysphoria is fairly common within transgender individuals (Olson, Schrager, Marvin, Simons, & Clark, 2015), and especially in traveling sex might become an issue because of the securitizing of gender at airports, and identification document contradictions of one's gender identity (Currah & Mulqueen, 2011).

Sex & Gender	It is important to make the distinction between gender and sex; sex means the biological genitalia that an individual has. Gender is a broader concept; it may refer to how an individual identifies themselves as, for example as female or male, or something else. Biological sex does not determine one's gender identity, even though gender has been assigned to an individual at birth based on their sex. (Erickson-Schroth, 2014; Diamond, Pardo, & Butterworth, 2011).
Cisgender	Cisgender simply refers to an individual who is naturally born as the sex which represents their gender identity, and they do not feel a major contradiction between their biological sex or their gender identity, hence identify with either of the binary genders, male or female (Aultman, 2014).
Travel/Tourist behavior	Travel behavior refers to the way people travel, their special implications of motivations and reasons for traveling (Cohen, Prayag, & Moital, 2014). There are many reasons why people travel, and this can be explained through multiple different theories, for example, the push and pull factors as desire to go on vacation, which can be regarded as indicators that affect travel behavior in individuals (Crompton, 1979). Travel or tourist behavior is subtracted from the concept of consumer behavior, and in tourism context, many different aspects of life may influence on our tourist behavior, for example, values, motivations, self-concept (identity), personality, attitudes and perceptions, feelings of trust, loyalty, and satisfaction and so on (Cohen et al., 2014).
Identity and Personality	Identity is formed by the idea of self, consisting of the concepts of who the person is and what they are like, and the concept of identity is socially defined (Baumeister, 1997). Although identity may reform itself during a person's lifetime (Vignoles et al., 2011), for example in the context of gender identity (Bussey & Bandura, 1999; Bussey, 2011), identity is also seen to hold a certain type of continuity, meaning that a person feels as though they are the same person they were before as well (APA, 2020c). Personality, then again, refers to the characteristics and behavioral

instances of a person that affects for example their self-concept, emotional patterns, and major traits (APA, 2020d).

1.5. Structure of the study

This paper builds on five parts and has been structured as follows: Introductory chapter shortly explores the overall phenomena of LGBT tourism, which is the starting point of the study positioning. The topic is then narrowed down to examine only the transgender segment of LGBT travelers, and the introductory chapter also lays out the objective, approach and context, as well as key concepts concerning the study. The second part of the paper presents the theoretical background through which the subject has been approached, and it is divided into two sub-chapters. In the first part, the aspects of transgender theory and gender identity, as well as the previous literature of transgender individuals in tourism setting are explored. In the second part, the connection of identity and personality in the context of tourism are presented. In the third part of the paper, the data collection and methods used to analyze the study are presented, and the fourth part follows with presenting the collected data set and study findings. And finally, the fifth part brings the paper together for a conclusion, exploring the findings of the study from managerial and theoretical perspectives, as well as examining the trustworthiness of the study.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. Transgender segment

2.1.1. Transgender theory & gender identity

Because of the binary gender system, individuals are defined either as male or female at birth based on their sex at birth. However, as previously described, a transgender person does not feel the congruence between their biological sex and the gender assigned to them at birth. As gender and gender roles are also a social construct, and as the congruence of biological sex and identified gender is missing, the individual might feel misplaced and uncomfortable in their gender role and society as a whole. They develop transgender experience, from which they might realize that their developed identity does not line up with the gender they have been assigned at birth. (Nagoshi & Brzuzy, 2010; Levitt & Ippolito, 2014; Diamond et al., 2011; Hausman, 2001).

Transgender theory, as presented by Nagoshi and Brzuzy (2010), based on Roen's ideas (2002), is a newly emerging theoretical orientation that aims to explore and gain understanding on the matter of gender and its many forms, as well as gender identity through the life experience of transgender individuals. The theoretical concept that has been previously used to explore the transgender segment among others has been feminism or queer theory, which bases on that "queer" in itself is a form of identity where the concepts of sex, sexuality, and gender overlap and create a bundle of possibilities how they can be understood (Nagoshi & Brzuzy, 2010; Hines, 2014). Queer theory is based on, but also challenging, the feminist and deconstructivist theories, which argue that different sexual behaviors and cognitions are the results of social constructs (Nagoshi & Brzuzy, 2010). Furthermore, gender identity has also been argued to belong to the grouping of social construction, as well as to repeated and expected behaviors of the binary gender system, hence meaning that gender identity is also open for challenging and questioning, as well as self-construction within the social environment (Butler, 1990; Nagoshi & Brzuzy, 2010). However, Hausman (2001) presented that queer theory does not necessarily recognize the perspective of transgenderism, although presents the possibility of a male having feminine traits or female having masculine traits as well as multiple gender identities, the theory is still based on the binary gender society. Furthermore, transgender theory presents different aspects to challenge both queer and social constructivism theories. The theory explores the construct that gender as in a binary system does not exist, but rather that individuals are free to build their own gender identity that does not need to fall into either male or female, but rather being either/or and both/neither. (Nagoshi & Brzuzy, 2010; Roen, 2002).

Identity plays a big part in a transgender person's life, as the congruence of gender assigned at birth does not reflect the gender they identify with (Diamond et al., 2011; Nagoshi & Brzuzy, 2010; Roen, 2002). Gender identity is a concept that has developed at least two different meanings over the years of research in psychology and psychiatry: firstly, gender identity may be seen as a sense of oneself, which goes beyond the anatomical awareness of a person, and secondly, it may be seen as a sense of self that endorses specific traits in a person, that are stereotypical to certain gender groups (Tate, 2014). Furthermore, gender identity has several theoretical approaches as well: the perspective can range from viewing gender identity as a social construct or viewing it as the creation of the unique characteristics of an individual. The perspective may also vary based on at which time does gender identity take its form: some theories suggest the identity to formulate during childhood while others argue towards adulthood, or even that gender identity is a fluid for change during the whole course of one's life. (Bussey, 2011). Gender might take multiple forms, as already discussed in this paper; gender identity and physical sex are interchangeable in modern-day society. In this sense, identity formation and recognition within oneself can be described as an individualized process which one may take multiple times during a life-span, and where the journey of discovering oneself is just as important as the outcome. (Diamond et al., 2011).

One theoretical perspective to gender identity is social cognitive theory. In this theory, gender identity is approached from the perspective that it is part of a broader concept of one's personal identity, and that gender identity is not fixed at any particular time during life course but rather it is seen as an ever transforming process. (Bussey, 2011; Bussey & Bandura, 1999). Gender identity is seen to be heavily influenced through interactions with others, which are ever since from birth reflected through gender. Because of this, it is natural that gender has such a strong impact on the self-concept formation of an individual, as social factors define how individuals are treated, as well as how they respond or are expected to respond. Social cognitive theory explores the fact that even though gender identity formation may start from birth, as a child is labeled either as boy or girl based on their biological sex and treated as such in a societal context, gender identity does not follow a linear development process as to where individual's identity is fixated on their biological sex. Gender identity is not viewed as one sided concept where an individual falls into a categorization based on their biological sex, but rather it is seen as a multifaceted concept that is prone to variation. (Bussey, 2011). Social cognitive theory leans on the perspective that one's behavior and identity is influenced by environmental and personal factors, as well as behavior itself (Bussey & Bandura, 1999). Based on this, it could be viewed that transgender experience formation starts as an individual does not feel congruence

between their biological sex and how they are treated by society as in that gender, which pushes them for gender re-assignment and transformation of gender identity. After being able to showcase themselves as the gender they identify with and being affirmed of the identity by society, the congruence is found. (Devor, 2004). However, the previously explored transgender theory challenges this type of social constructivism, as gender is not seen at all as a binary construct (Nagoshi & Brzuzy, 2010), but it provides an important perspective of how gender is constructed and may be reformed, not only in transgender individuals but also with cis-gendered people (Bussey, 2011).

Theoretical models to explore transgender experience and identity development have been attempted to formulate, one of the most famous one being Devor's (2004) model (Diamond et al., 2011). Devor's model consists of 14 stages of identity development that take place in a transgender person, as seen in Table 1. The model is more specific to the transgender experience and identity formation where the individual identifies within the binary system (referred to as transsexual in the model), rather than exploring the whole range of the transgender spectrum as an umbrella term. This can affect so that especially the later stages may somewhat differ from the proposed model, for example with non-binary individuals. It is also notable to mention that Devor's model has not been empirically validated, and it is unknown if the majority of people in this spectrum overcome these stages, or in such order. (Diamond et al., 2011). Devor (2004, pp. 42-44) also noted that one must be cautious trying to generalize the model as it does not necessarily apply to all individuals, and even though a person might enter to the process at some point in their lives, they might not go through it completely and stop the process on a certain stage of the model. This would mean that just because an individual would enter the process that they would inevitably transition to the opposite gender role. As with non-binary gender identities, for example, the stage 11, transition, might not be fully emerged stage as they do not necessarily feel the need to make gender re-assignment procedures, but are content to express their gender identity in other ways. (Devor, 2004; Diamond et al., 2011) Although Devor's model might not be able to be generalized nor is flexible enough to accommodate individuality in discovering transgenderism in oneself, it is still a valid description of the possible steps one might take on their experiential journey for gender identity re-formation.

Table 1. Model of transgender identity formation. Adapted from Devor (2004, p. 43)

Stages of Transsexual or Transgender Identity Formation		
Stage	*Some Characteristics*	*Some Actions*
1) Abiding Anxiety	Unfocussed gender and sex discomfort.	Preference for other gender activities and companionship.
2) Identity Confusion About Originally Assigned Gender and Sex	First doubts about suitability of originally assigned gender and sex.	Reactive gender and sex conforming activities.
3) Identity Comparisons About Originally Assigned Gender and Sex	Seeking and weighing alternative gender identities.	Experimenting with alternative gender consistent identities.
4) Discovery of Transsexualism or Transgenderism	Learning that transsexualism or transgenderism exists.	Accidental contact with information about transsexualism or transgenderism.
5) Identity Confusion About Transsexualism or Transgenderism	First doubts about the authenticity of own transsexualism or transgenderism.	Seeking more information about transsexualism or transgenderism.
6) Identity Comparisons About Transsexualism or Transgenderism	Testing transsexual or transgender identity using transsexual or transgender reference group.	Start to disindentify with originally assigned sex and gender. Start to identify as transsexed or transgender.
7) Tolerance of Transsexual or Transgender Identity	Identify as probably transsexual or transgender.	Increasingly disidentify as originally assigned gender and sex.
8) Delay Before Acceptance of Transsexual or Transgender Identity	Waiting for changed circumstances. Looking for confirmation of transsexual or transgender identity.	Seeking more information about transsexualism or transgenderism. Reality testing in intimate relationships and against further information about transsexualism or transgenderism.
9) Acceptance of Transsexual or Transgender Identity	Transsexual or transgender identity established.	Tell others about transsexual or transgender identity.
10) Delay Before Transition	Transsexual identity deepens. Final disidentity as original gender and sex. Anticipatory socialization.	Learning how to do transition. Saving money. Organizing support systems.
11) Transition	Changing genders and sexes.	Gender and sex reassignments.
12) Acceptance of Post-Transition Gender and Sex Identities	Post-transition identity established.	Successful post-transition living.
13) Integration	Transsexuality mostly invisible.	Stigma management. Identity integration.
14) Pride	Openly transsexed.	Transsexual advocacy.

Transgender individuals, who still identify within the binary system, often wish not to be identified as transgender but rather as their identified gender, male or female. They still, however, might feel the connection to the transgender and/or LGBT community, as being someone who has gone through the process of re-identifying themselves. (Diamond et al., 2011). Study by Couch et al. (2008) also argued that not only the social affirmation of gender identity was important to transgender individuals, but also the ability to amend their formal documentation to match their gender identity. In the context of tourism, traveling for transgender individuals in their identified gender might be an empowering experience, especially in the early stages of transitioning, but in the long-term the need for gender affirmation in travel decreases (Olson & Reddy-Best, 2019; Monterrubio et al., 2020). This may indicate the high importance of gender identity and identity affirmation that transgender individuals feel.

2.1.2. Identity misclassification and misgendering of transgender individuals

Identity misclassification refers to a situation where an individual is mistaken from their own status to another, for example when a high-status group member is mistaken as a low-status group member (Prewitt-Freilino & Bosson, 2008). In this setting, a misclassification would for example occur when a heterosexual person (high-status group) is misclassified as gay or lesbian (low-status group). Identity misclassification undermines an individual's social status, which then again can lead to negative affects regarding one's identity (Prewitt-Freilino & Bosson, 2008). This can lead to behaviors where the possibility of misclassification is tried to be avoided, for example, a heterosexual male avoiding contact with gay people and separating oneself from behaviors linked to gay men (Buck, Plant, Ratcliff, & Zielaskowski, 2013). In the case of transgender individuals, identity misclassification can often come in the form of misgendering, where the person's identified gender is not recognized by others. Identity misclassification is a psychologically disruptive event, and as it occurs, it can lead to several negative effects such as feelings of anxiety or depression, a sense of inauthentic experiences in social relations, and so on. (McLemore, 2014). In the relation of identity misclassification, psychologists and sociologists also talk of stigma, which refers to an attribute of an individual that is for some reason devalued by society. Individuals that can be characterized to belonging in a stigmatized group often experience lower status and control. (White Hughto, Reisner, & Pachankis, 2015; Kleinman & Hall-Clifford, 2009). According to McLemore (2014) and White Hughto et al. (2015), transgender individuals are a widely stigmatized group and not only lack of overall acceptance in society, but also who often face challenges of receiving proper opportunities to

employment and education, as well as limited quality of health care. The stigma can be seen partially derived from the fact that transgender individuals challenge the age-old binary construction of gender, which negatively resonates with most of the population. For transgender individuals, identity misclassification might heighten the feelings of gender dysphoria, resulting in mental problems like depression and anxiety, especially if the misclassification is constant and voluntarily caused. (McLemore, 2014). Misgendering in itself, however, does not only mean the event where gender pronouns are improperly used but also events where an individual is, for example, denied of access to gender assigned bathrooms or problems that occur because of the incongruency of one's identification documents and physical appearance (McLemore, 2014; Currah & Mulqueen, 2011; Couch et al., 2008).

In tourism setting, where identification documents are often a necessity for traveling, the missing congruence between a person's identified gender and identification documents, which may be signed for the gender assigned at birth, immediately creates a vulnerable moment for identity misclassification, or identification threat, through misgendering (Currah & Mulqueen, 2011). Both Olson and Reddy-Best (2019) and Monterrubio et al. (2020) in their studies also found that misgendering is common mistreatment of transgender people in tourism settings.

2.1.3. Previous research in tourism

As mentioned before, previous research for transgender individuals in tourism setting is very limited, and most of the LGBT tourism-related research is based on gay and lesbian travel. LGBT tourism has been used as an umbrella term for all these travelers, even though they are not a homogenous group, as, for example, transgender spectrum individuals can have very different needs than a gay traveler. (Monterrubio et al., 2020; Southall & Fallon, 2011). Gay travelers have, for example, often been characterized as high-end money users who spend their money quite sparingly (Southall & Fallon, 2011; UNWTO, 2017, p. 42), and this is not necessarily the case with transgender travelers, or even gays or other subsegments of LGBT travelers.

However, even if limited, the transgender community has not been completely un-researched from tourism perspective over the past years. Olson and Reddy-Best (2019) examined transgender tourism experiences with interviews of transgender and gender non-conforming individuals (TGNC) and using the grounded theory approach to create a theory of transgender travel experience, which is

illustrated in Figure 2. They discovered that traveling may influence these individuals in various ways; from additional consideration and planning to behavioral changes, as well as emotional labor regarding their gender identity. These aspects of traveling are driven by the fear and anxiety of being 'outed' of their transgender background, which may change the behavior and treatment of others towards them. Olson and Reddy-Best's theory of transgender travel was built on three perspectives; 1) fear and anxiety related to revealing of gender identity while travel, 2) TGNC individuals who purposefully hide their gender identity to avoid mistreatment and to have uninterrupted travel suffer from internal negative experiences related to their gender expression (gender dysphoria), and 3) non-TGNC individuals can influence TGNC travel experiences positively through awareness and acceptance and gender-affirming behaviors. Fear and anxiety factors seem to be often in the center of research of transgender individuals in tourism setting (Monterrubio et al., 2020; Currah & Mulqueen, 2011; Oakleaf & Richmond, 2017). Monterrubio et al. (2020) for example found in their studies of trans women's motivations for traveling, that even though traveling was viewed as beneficial for them in sense of gender affirmation and empowerment as they were finally after transitioning being able to travel as their identified gender, the social stigma limited their opportunities for travel and the negative experiences of mistreatment, such as misgendering, sexual harassment and physical as well as verbal violence, created a fear factor for traveling. In addition, Currah and Mulqueen's (2011) study as well examined the fear and anxiety factors concerning securitizing of gender at airports, where the misgendering of a transgender person was at high risk. Their study concentrated widely around the subject of the United States' TSA's (Transportation and Security Administration) Secure Flight program that requires flyers to provide personal information, such as gender, for airlines prior to travel. This information is further provided for TSA, which uses it for security checking at airports. Furthermore, TSA started using advanced imaging technologies at airports in late 2010, which creates more difficulties for traveling by air in the United States for transgender individuals. In other words, the advanced imaging technologies measure the body for identification purposes, and these biometrics used for identification become points of vulnerability for transgender bodies at airports (Clarkson, 2014). Both Currah and Mulqueen (2011) and Olson and Reddy-Best (2019) in their studies explored the problematics of advanced imaging technologies and the negative effects it has for transgender people. Olson and Reddy-Best's theory perspective number 2 (hiding of true gender identity) was largely dependent on this, as they found in their studies some transgender individuals were willing to dress and act like the gender assigned to them at birth to avoid being 'flagged' as different at the airport and to be able to pass through security without problems. Especially the in early stages of transitioning, transgender people might face the possibility of

misgendering, as their bodies do not yet affirm their desired gender identity, which causes discomfort and enhances feelings of gender dysphoria.

1. Transgender individuals experience fear or anxiety related to exposing their gender background

- Fear of mistreatment and unequal treatment when not viewed to comply with binary gender norms -> avoidance & precaution behaviors

2. Transgender individuals may purposefully conceal their gender identity in order to have interrupted travelling, which may lead to negative experiences internally relating to gender expression

- Passing as binary gender or concealing gender identity helps to create uninterrupted travel experiences
- Needing to conceal gender identity or to appear as wrong gender may lead to negative experiences of their internal sense of gender identity while travelling

3. Non transgender individuals may impact transgender person's travelling experiences

- Awareness and acceptance, gender affirming behaviors may result in positive experiences
- Awareness and acceptance results in uninterrupted travelling experiences

Figure 2. Theory of transgender travel experience. Adapted from Olson & Reddy-Best (2019, p. 259).

Olson-Reddy Best's (2019) study also presented as one of their theory points that awareness and acceptance of transgender travelers in tourism settings generally create more positive experiences for these individuals. In contradiction, Monterrubio et al.'s (2020) study did not end in similar results when examining their data. It was notable, however, that their study sample consisted of trans women who already had mostly been fully transitioned to female life and did not feel the need to find gender identity affirmation when traveling in the long-term, even if it was significant during the first times of traveling after transition. Awareness and acceptance hence might still be a relevant issue for transgender individuals who are in the beginning of their transition process for them to feel safe and accepted when traveling for the first times as their identified gender. The issue of acceptance is also an important factor for other LGBT segment tourists (McCaffery, 2017, pp. 26-27; UNWTO, 2017, pp. 66-75; Hong, Nguyen Thi, & Nguyen Thu, 2017, pp. 64-65) as they seek for LGBT friendly destinations, which is why it might be significant for transgender travelers as well, despite the contradictory results in research.

2.2. Identity and personality in the context of consumer behavior and travel

2.2.1. Identity and personality as a behavioral force

The concept of tourist or travel behavior derives from the overall picture of consumer behavior, and it can be seen to be guided by, for example, our emotions, decision-making processes, satisfaction and relationships, values, motivations, trust, loyalty, and self-concept, also regarded as personal identity, and personality (Cohen et al., 2014; Desforges, 2000). Identity, or identities as an individual may have multiple, can be viewed as the core of who we are and what we present as to the world but is also subject to change during our lives (Vignoles et al., 2011). As noted earlier, in the context of transgender people, identity is likely to evolve and change from a realization about being transgender individual, as well as throughout the journey of transitioning (Diamond et al., 2011).

Traveling may be regarded as an activity that affirms a person of their identity as they can present themselves to others as what they believe to be who they are, and hence provide this information to others for them to understand their identity (Thurlow & Jaworski, 2006; Haggard & Williams, 1992). It has been studied before that gender-affirming, as well as acceptance from non-transgender people during traveling, can have a positive impact on the travel experience for transgender individuals (Olson & Reddy-Best, 2019). Furthermore, as mentioned before, both Monterrubio et al. (2020) and Olson and Reddy-Best (2019) also discovered in their studies that misgendering, hence identity misclassification, was common mistreatment for transgender individuals in tourism settings. Because of the importance of transgender individuals to be viewed as their identified gender, the affirming factor of identity when traveling seems like an important attribute when examining transgender travel behavior. Previous studies also suggest that traveling can form the function in identity building for "finding or changing one-self" (Fullagar, 2002; Noy, 2004), which is often also used in the marketing of destinations and tourism products (Bruner, 1991). Hibbert, Dickinson, Gössling, and Curtin (2013) on the other hand discovered in their study that not only may identity play a critical role when forming our travel plans, or to our tourist behavior, but also that individuals may showcase their identity through the travel decisions they make.

Another perspective to identity and consumer behavior can be derived from the theory of self-congruency that is associated with the idea of self-concept (Landon, 1974; Sirgy, 1982). Identity and self-concept are closely related, but not entirely the same: when speaking of self-concept, it refers to the totality of definitions that one has of themselves. The construct of self-concept focuses on the personality traits of the person and their self-defined schemas of oneself. Identity, on the other hand,

refers to the inferences of who the person is and what they are alike. While identity is not only an internal concept but also socially defined, self-concept is existing only in the person's mind. (Baumeister, 1997). Research by Landon (1974) highlighted the importance of self-concept in consumer behavior research, as he argued that consumer's purchase intentions are guided by their self-image and ideal self-image. From this, the theory of self-congruity was derived, which is based on the premise that consumers view products as though they have personalities, and are keen on choosing products that match with their personality features (Kassarjian, 1971; Sirgy, 1982). In tourism context, the theory of self-congruence may be linked for example to destination loyalty, as consumers might choose their travel destination based on the congruence they sense and feel between the destination's brand personality and their own self-concept or personality characteristics, hence possibly forming a tourist-destination relationship and influencing travel behavior (Kumar, 2016; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011; Sirgy & Su, 2000). However, it has also been studied that in tourism context, very strict operationalization of self-congruity results in a low proportion of cases to be self-congruent, while with less strict threshold self-congruity of trips increases (Boksberger, Dolnicar, Laesser, & Randle, 2011). The self-congruity theory in tourism setting has also been studied from the perspective of Plog's tourist personality typology (Plog, 1974), indicating that marketing of tourism destinations matching traveler's personality significantly influenced their intention to visit a destination, much like Plog's model of psycho- and allocentric travelers explore individuals choosing a destination based on their personality factors (Kim, Yilmaz, & Choe, 2019). Plog's model of tourist personality typology will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

Personality and consumer behavior have been studied, with varying results. Already in 1971, Kassarjian made a review of articles related to personality and consumer behavior, revealing that although some researches had been able to find a relationship between the two, others had not found a significant connection. Kassarjian, however, still argued that personality has a significant relationship with consumer behavior (1971). With consumer behavior in tourism context, personality has been seen as a powerful factor in behavioral concepts, motivations of travel, and perceptions of how we view traveling (Swarbrooke & Horner, 2004). Tran, Nguyen, and Nguyen (2015) argued that in tourism recreation a failure of tourism businesses to understand the influence of personality in consumer behavior results in revenue loss and unsatisfied customers. Considering the importance of personality in psychological research, it is unfortunately widely ignored in tourism research (Jackson, White, & White, 2001). As transgender individuals are still such a poorly researched and understood customer segment in tourism industry, as well as a niche group, (UNWTO, 2017; Southall & Fallon,

2011), understanding the personality factors that relate to consumer behavior could be crucial in tailoring destinations and products that would attract them.

The relationship between identity and personality varies from the perspective of studies and researchers (Clancy & Dollinger, 1993; Vignoles et al., 2011). For example, identity can be described as a changeable construct of who we are (Vignoles et al., 2011), and personality as trait factors that are a stable part of us regardless of changing identity (McCrae & John, 1992), but also that personality traits may influence or even provide the foundation for identity development (Clancy & Dollinger, 1993; Grotevant, 1987). APA defines identity as the core sense of oneself that involves a sense of continuity (2020c), and as for personality as the special characteristics and behaviors that guide an individual's adjustment to life (APA, 2020d). Lounsbury, Levy, Leong, and Gibson (2007) argued in their study that all of the Big Five personality traits (openness, extraversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and neuroticism) correlate with a Sense of Identity, or how we define ourselves. Lounsbury et al.'s study affirms a previous study by Clancy and Dollinger (1993), who in their study as well confirmed a connection between identity and personality dimensions. While identity may reconstruct itself during an individual's lifetime, like for example in sense of gender identity, (Vignoles et al., 2011; Bussey, 2011), personality is usually believed to maintain its form throughout the individual's life as a fairly sturdy construct (Costa & McCrae, 1988), meaning that personality can be viewed as a more accurate predictor of human behavior than demographic factors (Jani, 2014).

For the purpose of this study, consumer behavior is seen to be guided by identity and personality, where identity is the core of who we are and personality the construct of how we present our identity. Furthermore, both these concepts are derived from the Self, or self-concept, which represents all the characteristics of a person. In this context, identity is regarded as a construct that may change during the life course of an individual, whereas personality traits stay stable even during identity transformation. The constructs of identity and personality then create a continuum, which shapes our behavior, and in the context of this study, tourist/travel behavior. The connection between identity and personality is illustrated in Figure 3.

The Self

Identity (how we define
ourselves; transgender
context)

Personality (stable
characteristics of a person)

Behavior (tourism context)
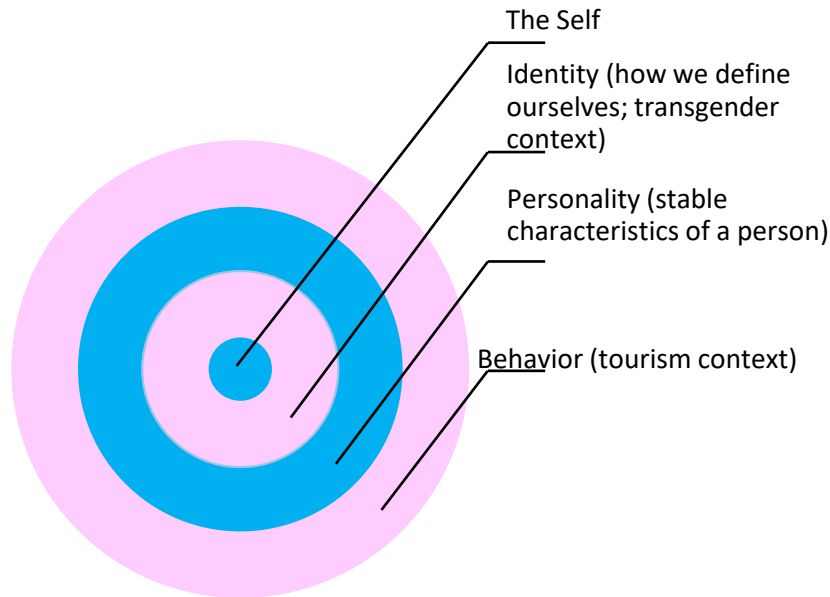
Figure 3. Illustration of identity and personality in connection to the study.

2.2.2. Tourist personality – Psychographic segmentation

As mentioned before, as personality may be viewed more accurate predictor of human behavior than demographic factors (Jani, 2014), this may have also lead to that the meaning of psychographic segmentation in tourism research has gained a substantially firm ground and popularity with marketers (Swarbrooke & Horner, 2004, p. 142). Psychographic segmentation bases on the premises that consumer behavior is determined by, for example, lifestyle choices, attitudes, opinions, interests, needs, and personalities of people (Swarbrooke & Horner, 2004, p. 142; Gladwell, 1990), which has resulted in better understanding of consumer behavior, for example, through consumer profiles, trend data, and possibilities for general segmentation (Wells, 1975). However, although personality being understood as one of the key factors in human behavior, research conducted in tourism context connecting to personality has still been fairly limited (Leung & Law, 2010). One of the most famous and utilized models connecting personality and tourism behavior has been presented by Stanley Plog in 1974. Plog's theory has gained substantial attention in tourism research and has stayed as one of the seminal papers in tourism academic literature through decades (Litvin & Smith, 2016), and especially when studying specific traveler's market, like the LGBT segment, previous studies have shown the model to be useful and applicable. (Ro, Olson, & Choi, 2017).

Plog's theory was, that destinations rise and fall in popularity because of the personality factors of travelers who chose their destinations. In other words, destinations appeal to a certain type of people with certain personality traits, creating a continuum where destinations' popularity increases or decreases over time. (Plog, 1974). The two sides to this continuum are *allocentric* and *psychocentric* travelers (Figure 4), and in the original work, Plog explored these two traveler types as the non-flyers (psychocentric) and flyers (allocentric). Allocentric travelers are more confident with having their own control, meaning that their traveling can be regarded as more adventurous and are more comfortable with risk behavior. They like to travel to unknown destinations and stay away from crowded, popular tourism places. Allocentrics are comfortable making their own travel plans and have full control over them. On the other side of the continuum lies the psychocentric travelers, who are less confident regarding having control and are more comfortable in safe planning and prefer popular destinations. Psychocentrics are more likely to for example purchase packaged travels or consult a tour operator in planning their trip. In the middle of the continuum, there is also the *mid-centric* traveler that is comfortable with both ends of the continuum, thus a balanced combination of the two. As the two sides of the continuum are the complete opposites of one another, it is unlikely that all travelers can be regarded as either or, meaning that travelers might lean towards a certain end of the continuum without falling to the exact type of allo- or psychocentric traveler. (Cruz-Milán, 2017; Plog, 1974). Destinations on the other hand move on the continuum based on their popularity: when a destination that appeals to the allocentrics becomes more known and popular, it slowly evolves into a psychocentric destination (Plog, 1974; Plog, 2001).
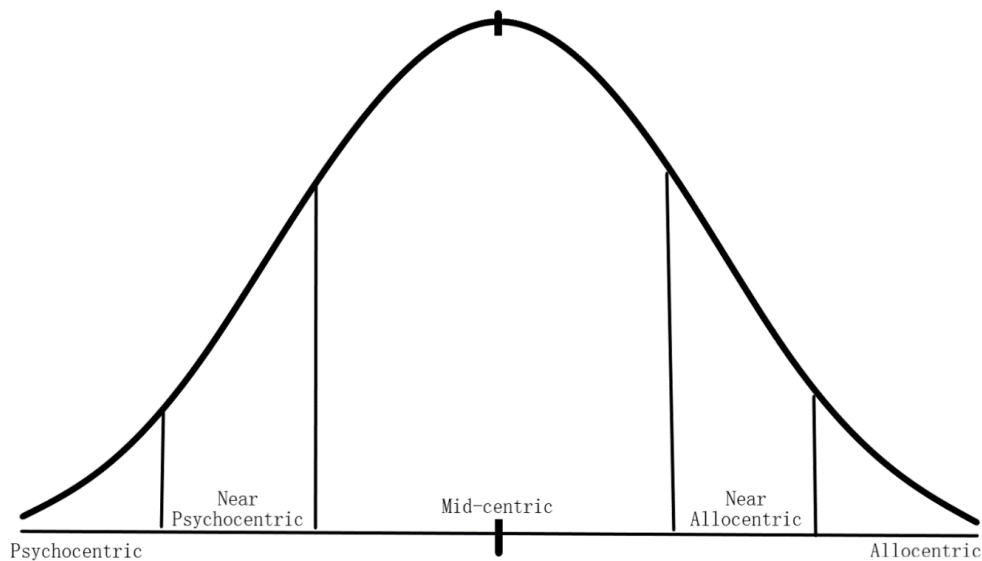

Figure 4. Tourist psychographic typology. Adapted from Plog (1974, p. 56).

Plog has revisited the theory in later research as well. In a paper published in 2001, Plog reintroduced the psychographic segmentation model with more detailed descriptions of the traveler types. In this study, Plog labeled the psychocentric traveler as *dependable psychocentrics* and allocentrics as *venturers*. Based on Plog's description, the dependable psychocentric traveler is seen as someone who does not necessarily seek out new experiences and innovations constantly but are content to stay within their circle of things familiar and known. In general, they are less exploring and innovative than venturers, they are fairly conservative in their daily lives and have lower self-confidence. They prefer the routine lifestyle, and because of their trustworthy nature, they make great supervisors that make sure plans are implemented carefully and by the rules. Venturers, on the other hand, are impulsive thrill-seekers, who are great innovators but poor to implement their ideas. They seek for adventure even in their daily lives and prefer novel and new over the routine. Venturers do not look up to any authority figures but trust their own judgment, and often find other people dull, preferring to be alone. (Plog, 2001; Plog, 2002). Like in the original research, Plog recognized that not all travelers fit into the extreme ends of the continuum and that relying on only two types of personalities is limitative. This is why in the updated version Plog also split the center of the model, meaning that a traveler can be more midcentric with a stronger influence towards either of the ends and be also labeled as either near- or centric dependable, or venturer (Figure 5).
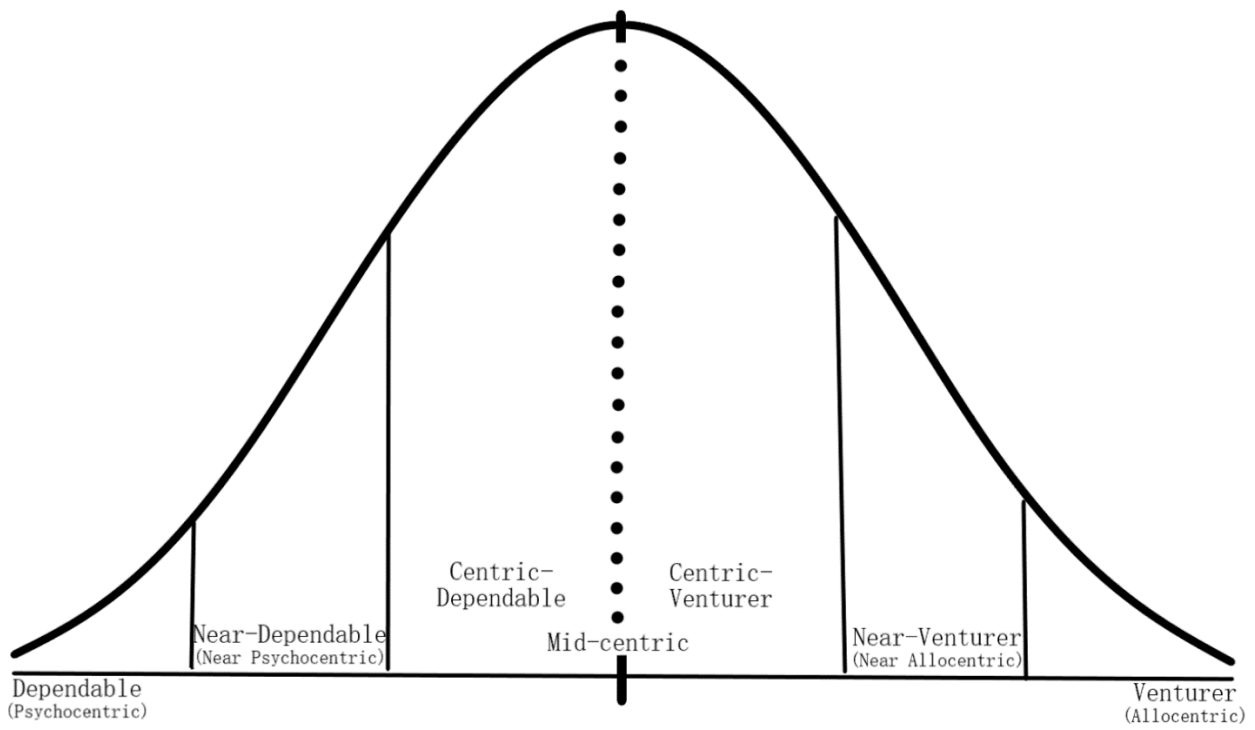
Figure 5. Updated version Plog's psychographic tourism personality model. Adapted from Plog (2002, p. 245; 2001, p. 16).

Plog's theory has been since then used to re-examine various aspects of tourism and the psychographic traits have been further studied and developed to include more personality traits and types to explain travelers. For example, Jackson et al. (2001) proceeded to develop tourist personality typology. Based on Plog's framework and other depending research on personality and tourism context, they developed a theory-driven framework to describe personality behaviors in tourism setting. The authors created a matrix involving Plog's allocentric and psychocentric traveler as well as an introvert and extravert personality types. As Plog's psychographic traits and extraversion dimensions do not correlate within themselves, they are used as an integrated structure to form four dimensions and tourist personality types/behaviors in Jackson et al.'s (2001) framework, as seen in Figure 6: #1 the explorer, #2 the adventurer, #3 the guided and #4 the groupie. The first two, explorer and adventurer, naturally fall into the allocentric category, while the remaining two, guided and groupie, to the psychocentric category. Within the introvert and extrovert dimensions of the framework, explorers and guided personality types are within the introvert spectrum, while adventurers and groupies belong to extraverts. (Jackson et al., 2001).

Figure 6. Tourist personality typology. Adapted from Jackson et al. (2001, p.181).

Plog's theory, however, has not survived without any backlash, and the model has been criticized not to show a relationship between tourist personality types and destination choice (Smith, 1990), or that the model does not predict where tourists destination choice lies but rather suggest of an ideal destination they would likely travel to (Litvin, 2006), and that the model is not applic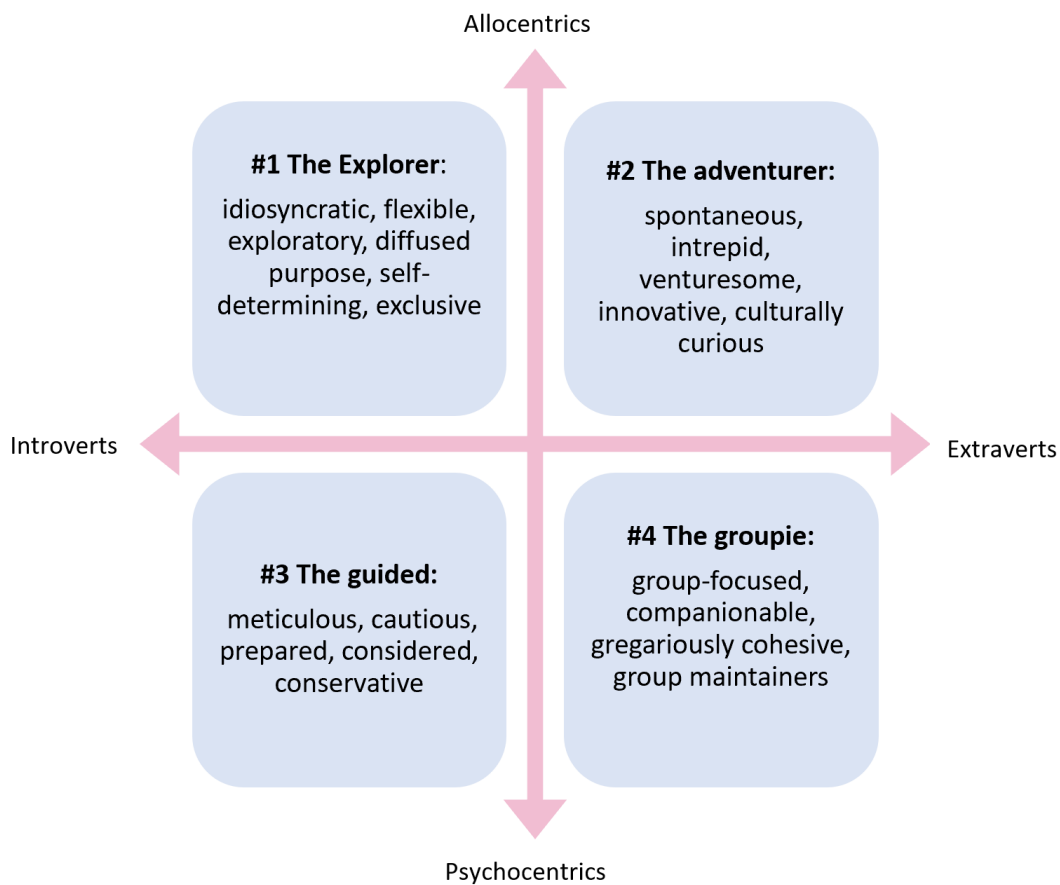able for predicting travel behavior within the broad population (Litvin & Smith, 2016). It has also been argued, that while personality factors may be stable through the human life cycle, the psychographics might not necessarily be as stable but rather dynamic in certain situations regarding travel, for example, intention to revisit (Park & Jang, 2014). Despite the criticism, as mentioned before, Plog's model of psychographic segmentation in determining travel behavior and understanding travel personality has stayed as one of the seminal papers within tourism literature and it is still widely used in research even today (Ro et al., 2017).

Furthermore, Plog's psychographic model can be utilized and linked to other personality theories, such as the Big Five, also called the Five Factor, personality trait model. The five factors defining personality according to the theory are extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness (McCrae & John, 1992). For example, openness and extraversion traits can be linked to venturers through curiosity and desire to see and experience novel things as well as the self-confidence and energetic characteristics of these travelers, while neuroticism trait can be seen as characteristics of dependables, as they prefer known destinations and avoid risk behavior (Jani, 2014). In Figure 7 the five factors are explained more thoroughly, as well as the personality characteristics that are associated with the high and low score ends of the traits, presented by various researchers. The Big Five personality trait model has been used in many different contexts, including predicting or explaining consumer behavior (Sandy & Gosling, 2013), tourism eco-friendly behavior (Kvasova, 2015; Verma, Kumar, & Chandra, 2017), and tourist information search behavior (Tan & Tang, 2013; Jani, Jang, & Hwang, 2014). Although linked to consumer behavior, some studies also suggest that there is no significant relationship between human personality characteristics and brand personality preferences (Shank & Langmeyer, 1994), however, in contradiction, studies have also been able to find some form of significant relationships between some of the Big Five personality traits and dimensions of brand preference types (Mulyanegara, Tsarenko, & Anderson, 2007). Further on, Pizam and Sussman (1995) studied the relationship of nationalities in contrast of tourist behavior, finding that tourist behavior manifested in five different dimensions: social interactions, commercial transactions, activity preferences, bargaining, and knowledge of destinations. Based on the framework, Tran et al. (2015) later tested how the Big Five personality traits correlated with the five dimensions of tourist behavior. The results indicated that extraversion correlated with social

interactions, neuroticism with bargaining, agreeableness with commercial transactions, openness with activity preferences, and conscientiousness with knowledge of the destination. Tran et al. (2015) concluded in their study, that businesses should specifically target their customers through the Big Five personality traits. These findings would then again suggest that the aspect of the Big Five personality traits and tourist behavior can be a relevant area of consumer behavior in research in tourism context.

Agreeableness
- Being helpful and participative, aiming for harmony of interaction with others, being agreeable and cooperative in general
- Compassionate, likeable, warm-hearted, generous, unselfish, altruistic, forgiving, friendly, trusting, straighforward

Conscientiousness
- Following of rules, trusthworthy and reliable person, they are conscientious and ordely in general
- Reliable, organized, planning, focused, efficient, responsible, careful, self-disciplined, hardworking, ambitious

Neuroticism
- Refers to the ability to adjust emotional level negative feelings like stress and pressure. Prone to psychological distress, lacking of emotional stability.
- Nervous, anxiety, less control over stress, worrying, react through emotions, insecure, respond impulsively

Extraversion
- Being socially outgoing and extraverted, warmhearted and expressive in nature, talkative and open in social settings.
- Sociable, talkative, active and energetic, person-oriented, affectionate, tendency to experience posivite emotions, lively

Openness
- Openness to experience and accept change, innovative and opennes towards learning new.
- Novelty, originality, different, curious of world, reflective, artistic, unpredictable,creative and imaginative, sensitive, appreciate intellectual stimulation, behaviourally flexible, untraditional
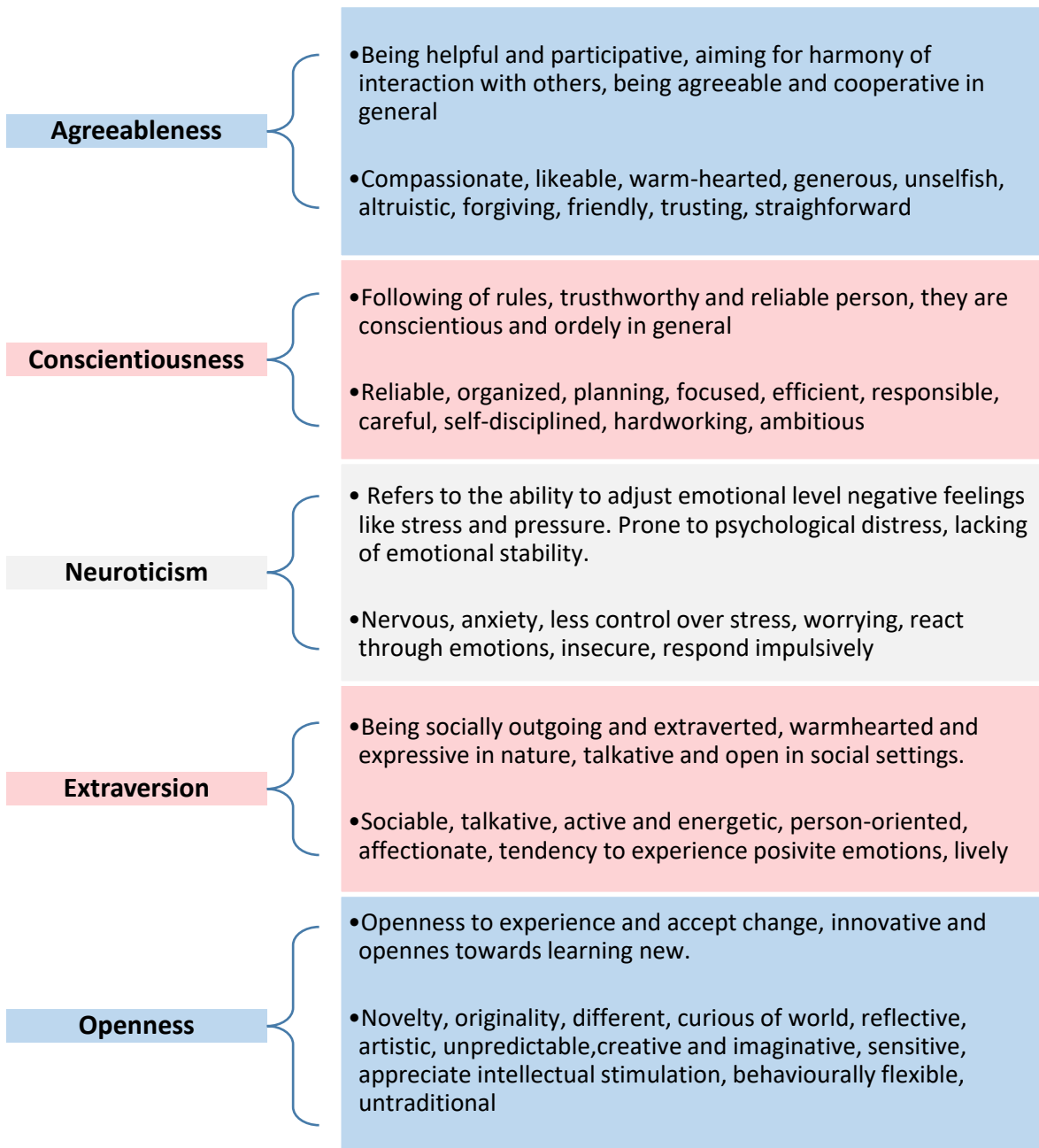
Figure 7. Literature review of the Big Five personality traits. (Lounsbury et al., 2007; Mulyanegara et al., 2009; Gohary & Hanzaee, 2014; Verma et al., 2017; Tran et al., 2015; Kwantes, Derbentseva, Lam, Vartanian & Marmurek., 2016; Jani et al., 2014; Jani, 2014).

3. DATA AND METHODS

3.1. Qualitative approach

The study at hand was conducted using a qualitative approach, which is used to gain further understanding of a phenomena of interest through rich, holistic, and in-depth data, and not to create generalized results or find connections between factors. (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Staller, 2010). While quantitative studies in tourism rely on facts and understanding the industry through rigorous data, qualitative studies aim to understand the 'soft side' and 'reality' of tourism through the complexity of social sciences (Walle, 1997; Wilson & Hollinshead, 2015). The approach to this study is inductive, as the theoretical background is limited. Because of the inductive nature of the study, the details of the theoretical frameworks were defined in more detail after the initial data analysis and finding references to the identity and personality aspect in the data set. The problem of qualitative research is that the data is studied through the perception of the researcher and their interpretation, meaning that it may be subject to false pretenses (Walle, 1997; Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008).

3.2. Data collection method

Data collection for the research was conducted by gathering narratives of transgender individuals. The narrative data collection method was decided on because of its flexibility, and as the theoretical background for the study was limited in nature. Narrative study methods, unlike some other qualitative frameworks, provides the possibility to conduct the research without any clear starting or finishing points (Squire, Andrews, & Tamboukou, 2013). The wide-scale options to do research and analyze data unstructured is seen particularly important for this study. The narrative study was also seen as well-fitting for the purpose of the research, as gender identity, hence being a transgender person, is seen as a central aspect for the study, and as the narrative research method aims to conceptualize and explore human experiences (Järviluoma, Vilkko, & Moisala, 2003; Josselson, 2010). Because of the sensitivity of the subject, it is seen as of utmost importance that the participants can describe their experiences as broadly as possible without the influence of the researcher, which is why online and completely anonymous data collection was designed for the research in hopes of gaining as rich data as possible. However, the difficulty in narrative research of this nature is that the researcher does not have any control of the issues presented, meaning that not all of the important topics are necessarily covered, and the data is not as rich and diverse as needed. Furthermore, as narrative research does not provide any clear starting or finishing points, there are no clear accounts

on how to analyze data and being able to formulate practical implications can be difficult. (Squire et al., 2013; Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). As the collected narratives are focusing on a certain issue in the individual's life, being transgender and traveling, as well as to the diversity and emotionality of the human experience of life, the nature of narratives collected are personal narratives (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008).

The study was narrowed down to only include transgender individuals from Finland, as cultural differences might become a factor when using a wide variety of participants (Gursoy & Umbreit, 2004). Other defining factors for the participants were at least 18-years of age and identifying as transgender person. The narrative request was sent to the Finnish transgender association Trasek at the beginning of June 2020, and it was published on their Facebook page on June 19th. The narrative request was also distributed by the researcher on their personal Instagram account on July 6th. In the narrative request, the call out for participants was focused for two groups: 1) transgender people who have traveled/travel by making their own traveling choices, and 2) transgender people who have not traveled because of their unique situation as a transgender person. Other than the requirement of being legal age (18) and being a transgender person, no other demographic variables were required to participate in the study. The legal age requirement was set in place to ensure that the narratives focus on travel experiences, where the storyteller has made their own choices and decisions regarding travel. The narrative collection was organized so, that leaving an entry was completely anonymous and the storytellers were made aware that they did not need to leave any specific information of themselves. It was also decided that the participants did not need to leave specific information of their status as a transgender individual, for example, their state of transitioning or whether they are MTF or FTM, as this type of information was seen as mostly irrelevant to the study. However, in the narrative request, it was mentioned that the participants can go over these issues as well, in case they felt like it was a relevant part of their experience and has impacted on their traveling behavior.

By the end of the response collection, which occurred on the 16th of July 2020, there were altogether 12 narratives submitted for the study. One of the narratives approached the issue through the helping questions provided by the researcher in the narrative request, rest were freely written experiences and descriptions of travel. Although the narrative request was targeted for transgender individuals who identify as male or female, at least one narrative was produced by a non-binary person. Because of the nature of the story, as their narrative was in line with issues presented in other stories and they mentioned that their partner is a transgender person which affected their travel behavior, the narrative was not excluded from the study. One of the storytellers informed that their travel plans had been

canceled because of the COVID-19 pandemic, and it was assumed they had not traveled before. The other 11 stories informed of traveling before at least at some point during the course of their lives.

As studying transgender people can be viewed as a sensitive topic due to the troubled history of transgender research (Vincent, 2018), the ethical guidelines set for the study were highly important and in focus during the planning of the study. As research regarding the transgender population has increased over the years, the results of the previous studies have rapidly grown outdated, as new theories have been recognized and the language regarding the segment has changed (Nagoshi & Brzuzy, 2010). The outdated language for example becomes a problem when the outdated terminology, like *transsexual* instead of *transgender*, is being used in a study, which then offends the study subject group. This can lead to frustration of the participants, resulting for example in low participation rate or other problems regarding the study. (Vincent, 2018). Because of this, the ethical guidelines presented by Vincent (2018) were taken into consideration and applied to the study from the parts that it was possible. For example, the study was designed so that the participation was completely anonymous, the contact information of the researcher was provided, the language issues were taken into consideration when designing the study, and so on.

3.3. Data analysis methods

Data analysis for the research was sectioned in two parts: first, a qualitative content analysis was performed, and later a narrative analysis was also conducted. Qualitative content analysis was chosen based on its applicability and flexibility in analyzing unconstructed qualitative data (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Qualitative content analysis can be divided into different approaches, like inductive and deductive (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008) or conventional, directed, and summative (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) categories. The inductive or conventional approach is recommended when there is limited former knowledge of the subject at hand and the aim is to describe phenomena rather than testing existing theory within new contexts (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005), which is why the combination of these approaches is utilized in this study. With these approaches, the analysis is straightforwardly conducted from the research data and so this way the analysis is deriving direct information from the data set and is not influenced by pre-existing categories, themes, or theoretical standpoints (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Elo and Kyngäs (2008) present that with an inductive approach the analysis consists of three-phases;

open coding, organizing into categories, and abstracted into compact descriptions of the research topic. For this paper, the data analysis follows these presented three phases.

In addition to qualitative content analysis, the data was studied using narrative analysis. As using two different analyzing methods can be regarded as a method of triangulation (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008), it was seen as appropriate to also perform the narrative analysis to improve the trustworthiness of the research, especially because of the fairly low response count. Furthermore, using another data analysis method to accompany the qualitative content analysis seemed necessary, as it might have overlooked some of the underlining issues and nuances related to transgender individual's traveling, and the narrative analysis might deepen the understanding of transgender traveler's behavior. In the narrative analysis, the interpretation of the researcher is even more central factor as collected narratives are formulated into a new form of a story, to further analyze and understand the data (Sahlstein Parcell & Baker, 2018), which also need to be remembered when addressing the trustworthiness of the research (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Spiggle, 1994; Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). It is important to note the differences in narrative methods: while narrative analysis focuses on reconstructing the empirical data by combining collected narratives into new narratives that can compactly describe the issues presented in the whole data set, analysis of narratives means using analytical methods to study the plot, storytelling, structures, and story types with the aim of studying the form of representation in the narratives (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). For this study, the narrative analysis method was utilized for the second form of analysis, as it was seen more fitting for the purpose of the research, since the aim was to generate deeper knowledge of transgender individual's behavior and *what* the narratives were about, rather than focusing on the representation of the narratives collected for the study. Further on, narrative analysis can take four different forms, depending on what is the aim result of the analysis; structural, functional, thematic, and dialogic/performance (Sahlstein Parcell & Baker, 2018). With the thematic narrative approach, the emphasis of the analysis is on the content of the story, what the story is about, and the meaningful nuances of experiences, rather than the structure of the story (Riessman, 2008a; Sahlstein Parcell & Baker, 2018; Riessman, 2008b). As the focus of the analysis for this paper is in the content and travel experiences, the thematic approach to narrative analysis was utilized. The aim of the narrative analysis in this paper was to understand *what* the written travel narratives were about with transgender individuals, hence, the reconstructed narratives are focusing on the *meaning* found in original narratives (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008).

4. FINDINGS

4.1. Qualitative Content Analysis

4.1.1. Overview of Findings – Open coding & Categorization

After a thorough examination of the data, relevant strings of narratives were highlighted and separated from the original narratives to examine them further. During this stage, the narrative strings were paraphrased to find broader meaning and then subtracted into compact coding, as presented in Table 3. The table showcases all the initial codes, as well as the frequency of them in each narrative.

Table 2. Open coding categories and frequency in narratives.

Open codes	N1	N2	N3	N4	N5	N6	N7	N8	N9	N10	N11	N12
Security & Safety	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Information search				X		X	X			X		X
Trans & Human rights, gender equality					X				X			
Traveling as trans not as easy as for cis-gendered person	X	X	X				X	X			X	X
Traveling not seen as important	X	X	X									
Passion for traveling											X	
Precautions and planning		X	X			X	X			X		X
Identity affirmation	X		X		X	X					X	
Identity in general	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Identity threat (misgendering)						X		X		X		

Gender dysphoria		X					X				X	
Familiarity (of destination or traveling in general)									X			
Tourism marketing				X				X				
Stress & Anxiety		X					X		X	X		X
Coping alone		X										
Tourism activities						X	X					

After the presented open coding, the codes were organized into more holistic categories, based on the nuances in which they were presented. Some of the codes were interlinked, and this is also the case within the main categories. These main categories are illustrated in Figure 8. From the open codes, only the codes *passion for traveling*, *coping alone*, *tourism marketing,* and *tourism activities* did not necessarily fall into any precise category or could be linked through nuances to another code, but are still considered in the analysis when applicable. In addition, the sub-category of self-congruence within the identity category was introduced as an intertwined dimension of choosing LGBT friendly destination and identifying as part of the segment. The decision to introduce this sub-category was made after the final analysis, as choosing LGBT friendly destination presented itself, for example, regarding safety and security, but it was seen as more fitting for the identity category based on the self-congruence theory. It is also important to note, that the main category of identity also includes aspects of personality factors regarding traveling choices. The most important issues raised were seen to be *security and safety*, *identity,* and lastly *stress and anxiety*. Especially the identity category was seen to be particularly important for the study, as issues regarding security and safety as well as stress and anxiety have already been discovered in previous studies regarding the segment.
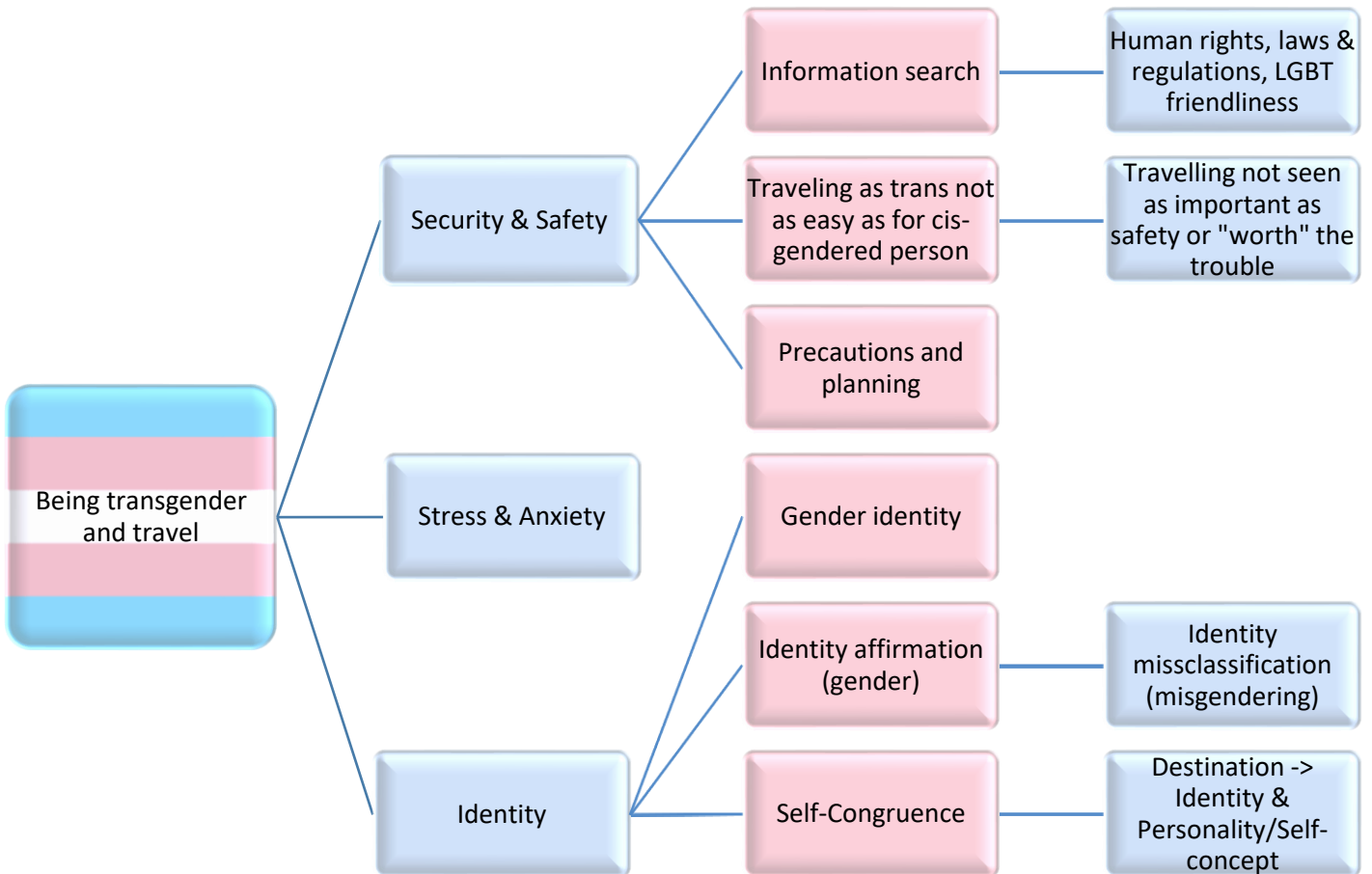
Figure 8. Main categories of content analysis.

4.1.2. Security & Safety

"In the future, I might be brave enough to travel, if it just surely is safe." N8

Almost all of the narratives directly discussed the effects with feelings of security and safety towards their travel behavior. Two narratives (N2 and N3) did not directly refer to the connection but implied it through their need for travel planning and precautions, as well as an overall perspective of traveling. Security and safety, and all presented sub-categories are in line with previous studies (Olson & Reddy-Best, 2019; Monterrubio et al., 2020), and it was expected for these themes to rise from data.

Security and safety issues were presented in many forms, for example by examining the LGBT friendliness of a destination *"I think about the human rights situation in a country. I think about the history of the country from the perspective of human rights and Google for example if in the destination city they have ever had Pride events."* (N4), *"I try to avoid traveling to countries where*

being transgender or other LGBT transparency is frowned upon/illegal/or otherwise wrong culturally…" (N6), laws and legislation issues *"In Finland, I know in which type of places it is safe for me to go outside. Abroad, however, I am not familiar with the culture and legislation in such way, that I could feel myself as being safe."* (N1), *"If I want to travel abroad, first I need to investigate if being transgender is illegal in the destination country or how it is viewed."* (N7) or brought it up otherwise in different contexts, like about industry workers being trained to face gender and sexual minorities in their work, which contributes to the feeling of security (N4). Some narratives addressed the issues of anxiety and safety factors influenced by full body-scanners or security at airports and other security checkpoints (N2, N3, N5, N6, N7, N8, N10, N12), however, one narrative also pointed out they had never felt airport security as troublesome (N11). Information search regarding the destination and traveling, in general, was also seen as part of the main category of security and safety, as many indicated that they searched for information in this manner (N4, N6, N7, N12). However, at least one narrative directly indicated not doing information research prior to traveling, as they trusted the good reputation of the city they were traveling to as confirmation of safety (N1).

Some narratives referred to security and safety issues through the remarks of traveling as transgender not being the same as what it is for a cis-gendered person. This came out for example in the form of needing to acknowledge laws about transgender individuals, like is it illegal in the destination country (N6, N7, N9), lack of having destination options that are both safe and affordable (N8), not being able to participate in all desirable tourism activities or the difficulty of participating (N12, N11, N7) and general feelings of restricts of traveling due to being a transgender person (N1, N2, N8). One narrative, for example, expressed the issue as follows: *"Travel stories by cis-gendered individuals can also arise feelings of bitterness, not because that I would myself like to travel as much, but because they are so blind to the fact that the world is not as open for everyone like it is for them."* (N1). Regarding of tourism activities, narratives explained for example *"I cannot go to spas at all, because I look like a man, but my genitalia is so-to-say the wrong kind."* (N7), and *"More I get nervous about the same things as I do at home – so sanitary spaces, spas and swimming places: where do I change my clothes, do I need to be naked, can this be seen through paper underwear, being ashamed to crouch to go peeing in forest and so on."* (N11). So, as mentioned in narrative 1, the world does not seem to be as open for transgender individuals as it is for the majority of the population, not even in tourism setting. This can also be regarded as a general problem for the whole LGBT traveler segment (UNWTO, 2017; Southall & Fallon, 2011).

Interestingly, one story (N4) explored the situation where they did not think about their gender background and unsafety through the perspective of transgenderism, but they were more concerned about their safety as a non-straight couple. Previously straight couples, of whom one has later on transitioned to the opposite gender and hence become gay/lesbian couple may experience unfamiliarity in a social setting that affects their behavior, for example not being able to or being uncomfortable to show affection to one another in public (Oakleaf & Richmond, 2017). The same storyteller also mentioned that all signs, like stickers and other public showcasing of LGBT friendliness, brings the feeling of safety to them, as they feel welcomed in such spaces. Relating to tourism marketing, they also explored that *"Gays do not only go for sex-holidays, which seems to be the core of marketing, but they go for all types of holidays. Resting holidays. Being able to rest and relax is not possible if you do not feel as being safe, so the industry should pay more attention to friendliness, consideration and the feeling of safety."*, which complies with previous notions of that the LGBT traveler sector is diverse and lack in previous research has resulted in too narrow scope for the tourism industry to market for all the segments of the sector (Southall & Fallon, 2011; UNWTO, 2017; Hughes, 2002).

Relating to security and safety, in the sub-category precautions and planning, some of the narratives addressed the different risk avoidance behaviors they had adapted to traveling. For example, N6 explained that they needed to dress and appear as the wrong gender for them, as they were in the beginning of their transition journey and would not pass as their identified gender yet. The study by Olson and Reddy-Best (2019) also discovered these types of risk avoidance behaviors. Risk avoidance, such as relating to destination choice, has also been studied for example with gay men (Hughes, 2002), and since the acceptance of LGBT people around the world still varies (UNWTO, 2017), it may be assumed that risk avoidance is even a core aspect of making travel plans for transgender individuals, and the whole LGBT segment as well.

4.1.3. Stress and Anxiety

"When I was younger, especially in the beginning of transitioning, traveling stressed me extremely much." N9

Almost half of the stories directly indicated feelings of stress and anxiety during traveling, and most of the storytellers indirectly referred to these negative feelings some other way. However, as seen for

example in the quotation above, some stories indicated that even though they felt feelings of anxiety and stress about traveling before, they did not any longer after being transitioned enough to pass as their identified gender, or having fully transitioned to their gender (N1, N5, N9, N11). As transgender individual moves to the transition phase of their journey to redefine their gender identity, even the most normal routines, like shopping or using public bathrooms, may become a source for anxiety, as the individual is adapting to the new social role of a different gender. However, as they become more comfortable with the transition process and are being recognized and affirmed of their identity by others, the anxiety also might decrease, and the situation normalizes. (Devor, 2004). The process, however, naturally is different for everyone, as seen from one storyteller, who even felt that their transitioning process had helped their confidence for traveling: *"I am FtM and I feel as though the whole process has made traveling easier for me when I am interpreted the right way. As a man, the world is much safer and more open to me, especially when traveling alone."* (N11). A common source of stress and anxiety detected in the stories was for example passport and other security procedures at airports and other points of entry (N2, N5, N7, N8, N9, N10, N12). The missing congruence between identified gender and juridical gender based on biological sex can further result in misgendering at airports and other places, like bars and restaurants, during traveling (Couch et al., 2008; Currah & Mulqueen, 2011; McLemore, 2014; Olson & Reddy-Best, 2019).

Two of the storytellers (N2, N12) indicated that they felt stressed and anxious in general in life or at airports, not necessarily just in travel situations because of their transgender background. For example, one story described their view of travel as follows: *"Probably more distressing than cisgendered individuals, but as I told, I am easily stressed individual in general."* (N2). The same story also described their anxiety to rise at security checks at the airport, because they did not want to, for example, anyone to notice they had a chest binder packed with them. Not being able to wear a binder when flying also induced anxiety to this person, and further on not being able to wear the binder may cause feelings of dysphoria, and the threat of misgendering increases.

One of the storytellers (N10) explained that they had been planning to travel to Europe during the upcoming summer, but because of the global pandemic COVID-19, their plans had been canceled. In their story, they also explained that even though they had been planning the trip, they were not sure if they had traveled in the end at all, as even making the plans had left them feeling stressed and anxious. In their travel plans, they had for example made clear to avoid air traveling, however, partly for environmental causes and not fully because of their transgender background. They, however, also expressed great distress and worry about being misgendered, or been flagged at the airport for the

missing congruence of their gender appearance and gender identity. They continued their story with *"I am getting my social security number changed maybe during the autumn, so maybe next year summer traveling will be a bit easier. Of course, however, I cannot know how hormone treatment has affected my appearance then; to this point, it has affected less than I was expecting in winter."* (N10) In this case, as well, it seemed like congruence of identification documents and gender identity was seen as a crucial factor in lessening the anxiety of traveling, although the appearance issue still might remain.

4.1.4. Identity

"In the destination, I try to be more freely myself, as in another country I can sort of escape the transphobia, generalization, and misgendering I face in Finland, which is, unfortunately, in my own life quite daily. Not being known and being able to be who I truly am, that is the most freeing feeling ever." N6

"I traveled to Russia for necessary family matters after changing my name and had been on testosterone for about 4-6 months. No surgeries had been done and my gender in the passport was wrong. ... The image of a man burned into my mind, who laughed at my passport, mockingly sneering as he declared how 'weird' I was." N3

Regarding how one views traveling: *"Also annoying because I do not like the fact how my gender affects so many things in my life."* N2

As seen from the initial coding, the subject of identity was mentioned in all of the narratives, either directly or indirectly. The subject of identity also arose in different forms, whether it was for identity in general, gender identity and identity affirmation, identity misclassification, and so on. Some of the narratives addressed the issue through the problems with identification documents, which is known to be a barrier for transgender travelers (Couch et al., 2008; Currah & Mulqueen, 2011): *"After the juridical changes, I once went to Saarbrücken in Germany, and then I had no problems. I did not dare to travel to the United States or Canada in fear of the full-body scanners, as I heard that in the worst case, they might deny access through the gates as they went off. After done with my vaginoplasty I went to Germany once more, in Berlin and München. This time they had full-body scanners at the airport, which I passed with no problems."* N5, *"I am in the beginning of my transition journey, so I*

do not yet "pass" as my identified gender. Because of this, I need to dress as the wrong gender for example at airport security and for passport picture recognition's sake." N6, *"My passport still has the notion that I would be a woman, which does not comply with my appearance. This might lead to my background being revealed, or the wrong gender in the document might result in confusion. This is why I feel anxious about the security checks at airports. I believe that once I have the gender corrected in my passport, the problem will go away."* N7 and *"The possibility of misgendering made me anxious, and when I still had the wrong gender in my passport, I would always be anxious if anyone was going to say something about it."* N9. A transgender person being revealed of their gender background, as implied in the narratives, is a form of violence towards transgender individuals that compromises their safety, as it may result in them being attacked because of their gender background (Lombardi, Wilchins, Priesing, & Malouf, 2001).

Identity affirmation, especially in the beginning of the transition, can be understood to be an empowering experience when traveling, although later on, in post-transition stage when a person can fully present as their identified gender, identity affirmation is not as important part of travel any longer (Monterrubio et al., 2020; Olson & Reddy-Best, 2019). This was also discovered in the narrative data, like the quotation at the beginning of this chapter from N6 for example indicates. Some of the narratives (N1, N5, N9, N11) directly indicated that after being already some time in transition and identification documents matching with gender identity, traveling was seen more accessible and even desirable, however, in these narratives there were no clear indications of a highly positive influence of gender affirmation towards their experience of travel. Story N3 recalled a travel experience as follows: *"Inland* [after customs in a train to Russia] *I was recognized as a male on the streets, which was a surprise and a positive experience for me.".* They had faced an uncomfortable situation when traveling to Russia as the customs officers had found their identification documents not in congruence with their appearance. However, they also had the one positive experience that affirmed their gender identity, it being an important aspect of the holistic experience. Another narrative recalled a travel experience as follows: *"During my last trip, I traveled with my husband and his children. I was clearly treated as the mother of the family, which was surprising and even amusing. My husband was asked of all the money-related issues, and I was asked of the issues of the children, even though I had not known them for too long."* (N5). The storyteller informed that their juridical gender had been changed, and that they had not travelled at all before the change had occurred. However, they also explained that there were other reasons as well for not traveling during that time. Although not directly referred, the identity affirmation as their real gender, but also being identified as mother, seems to have been a positive experience for the individual. Being affirmed of their identity, when

the person does not necessarily get the affirmation of it in daily life can result as positive experiences when travelling (Thurlow & Jaworski, 2006). In this case (especially N6), not necessarily been recognized as the identified gender in daily interactions and even facing phobia against them, but being able to present as who they truly are when in destination, can be an extremely empowering experience during travelling. Tourism and traveling an also be seen from the perspective of being a tool of "finding oneself" (Hibbert et al., 2013), which could also be detected from story N6 within regards of being able to present themselves in their own identity, as well as pursuing cultural activities related to their identity. However, it is important to note, that even though gender or identity affirmation might be a significant source of positive experiences in early transition transgender individuals, affirmation related behaviors have not been recognized as major motivational push factors for them in the context of traveling (Monterrubio et al., 2020; Olson & Reddy-Best, 2019).

"I never dream of holiday trips. ... Although being transgender is my main reason for not traveling, I do not really suffer from it. ... I do not feel as though my life is not any less rich because I cannot travel." N1

Some of the stories indicated, that traveling was not seen as something too important in the storyteller's life (N1, N2, N3). This came through from direct comment on the matter, like in the above quotation from N1, or through explaining that they did not travel unless it was absolutely necessary. This might be the case for many transgender individuals especially in the beginning of their transition journey (Olson & Reddy-Best, 2019). Story of N1 also explained: *"I do not really miss going abroad, and for ecological reasons I think it is good that I have so many things, which make traveling so undesirable for me."*, indicating that not wanting to travel because of the transgender background was not that black and white, but rather a combination of several nuances that influence the choice whether or not to travel.

"I have never traveled anywhere, where I would need to be afraid of because of my identity." N2
"[in context of not traveling to countries known as not accepting of LGBT or transgender people]... as I do not want my identity to be an issue that I should be ashamed of." N6

The issue of identity was often intertwined also with the matter of security and safety, as seen from the two quotations above. As being a transgender person is still illegal or otherwise not recognized in many countries around the world (UNWTO, 2017), having transgender background restricts the options for traveling in this sense as well. In other words, their identity can become a barrier to

traveling, which can also be derived from the previous notions in this chapter. To try eliminating problems presented by their gender identity, transgender people might need to adapt avoidance behaviors, that allow them to travel (Olson & Reddy-Best, 2019), as explored earlier in this study as well. This might mean presenting as the wrong gender at points of entry and security checks, like narrative N6 also in this study indicated. Not being able to be yourself and present in the gender you identify in, however, may cause a heightened sense of gender dysphoria, leading to other negative emotions as well.

Other avoidance behaviors may include for example keeping certain medical documents proving/explaining transgender background in order not to be flagged at security checks (Olson & Reddy-Best, 2019). Two narratives (N3, N7) indicated they had taken these types of precautions prior to travel in order to defend their identity, for example, N3: *"[in regards their name not complying with their appearance] They asked why my name was a man's name, but the gender marker on my passport was for a female. I explained that some names in Finland are non-binary and that I had a right to use it. For this, I took photos of the papers from magistrate to confirm this, but they did not care about them."*. Transgender people may often carry a letter from their doctor explaining the unique situation with their gender appearance to avoid further problems at airports, like with the previously mentioned full-body scanners. Although this risk avoidance behavior might be connected more with the early or pre-transition transgender individuals, some may still carry these types of documents even in post-transition. (Olson & Reddy-Best, 2019).

"Travelling might be nice and relaxing, but I have not really ever traveled much. Already in my younger years, during the 90s, I experienced security check at an airport in Germany as troublesome, as they first misgendered me, and after seeing the gender in my passport, I had to change the [gendered] lines." N8

The quotation above from N8 is a classic case of misgendering, which might still happen today at many airports or other points of entry. For example, in the United States, the TSA officers evaluate the gender of a person by their appearance before entering the full-body scanners, which continues with the machine determining whether or not the person has enough male or female characteristics (like breast tissue or correct genitalia) for them to be regarded as 'safe' to enter (Clarkson, 2014; Currah & Mulqueen, 2011). Misgendering is found to be common mistreatment of transgender individuals in tourism setting (Olson & Reddy-Best, 2019; Monterrubio et al., 2020), and because of the psychologically disruptive nature of misgendering, a form of identity misclassification,

(McLemore, 2014), this may be regarded as one of the key issues that relate to identity while traveling as a transgender person. Almost all of the stories either shared an experience of misgendering or indicated it as one of the causes of stress, anxiety, or fear during travel.

The data also showed signs of self-congruence happening when choosing destinations, as some of the storytellers indicated they traveled to destinations that were known for LGBT friendliness and acceptance (N4, N6, N7, N9). Although this was often connected to the security and safety factors of the destination, as LGBT acceptance is seen as a reassurance of safety, it might also be because transgender individuals feel the connection to the LGBT community, and see that these destinations resonate the same personality features as themselves. This came through especially in story N6, where they say: *"Abroad, I try to search for more information about LGBT history and possibly visit LGBT forward museums or memorial sites. In other words, being a transgender person has brought a new part of culture into my life, which I could not have even imagined before coming out of the closet."*. This indicated that the person did not only seek for LGBT destinations but also activities that involved the same connection. Another story also touched the subject as follows: *"Trans-friendly tour operators, for example, could research the safety perspectives in advance, book whole hotels and so on."* (N8), and even though this is also related to tourism marketing and operations as well as safety, it may also be interpreted that the individual might be searching for the other aspects of the LGBT, or even just transgender, community that might resonate with themselves, for example, with the notion of a tour operator booking a whole hotel exclusively for transgender customers. Identities may hold a critical role when making our travel choices (Hibbert et al., 2013), and when an individual finds a destination that resonates with their self-concept and further on identity, they might choose that destination over others (Kumar, 2016; Sirgy & Su, 2000; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011; Kim et al., 2019), in this case, a transgender person choosing LGBT or transgender forwarded destination, or activities.

"But on the other hand, I also react to situations with the privilege of being a white man – if my euros are good enough, I am good enough, just like I am." N11

Although identity or gender affirmation may be an empowering experience when traveling in the beginning of transition journey, or even pre-transition for transgender individuals, the need or desire for affirmation may decrease in post-transition traveling (Olson & Reddy-Best, 2019; Monterrubio et al., 2020). The narratives that were told from the perspective of post-transition travel did not necessarily explore the issue of identity affirmation as much as the pre-transition or early transition

narratives, which may indicate that it is not as important factor of traveling for them. However, a post-transition story of N11 raised an interesting notion regarding their identity and being validated in tourism setting. They explored their travel behavior as that even though they still faced problems when traveling, for example, the bathroom problem, that they are just like any other paying customer, and that their existence is just as valid as others. Even though not directly a gender affirmation related thought, the story was heavily influenced by identity aspects, which may indicate that although the identity affirmation is not seen as important any longer in post-transitioning travel, the subject of identity is still very central to the transgender experience, in tourism setting as well. They also, as quoted before, explored the fact how transitioning has actually made their traveling easier, as transitioning from female to male has opened a safer world for them. The difference between feelings of safety and security has also been reported in previous studies, where males with transgender backgrounds felt safer in public, and on the contrary, females experience feelings of increased unsafety after transitioning (Oakleaf & Richmond, 2017; Moran & Sharpe, 2004).

4.1.5. Theoretical perspective on findings of qualitative content analysis

As this study was conducted as inductive research, the theoretical background for the study was largely defined after the initial analysis. Based on the qualitative content analysis, as well as the importance of identity in transgender experience, identity, and personality in behavioral context was seen as a fitting background for the study. For this analysis, especially the framework of Plog (1974; 2001), and Jackson et al.'s. (2001) framework based on Plog's typology, as well as the related concepts, are used in analyzing the travel behavior of transgender individuals.

As seen from the qualitative content analysis, transgender people often chose LGBT friendly destinations for traveling. This is often a result of these destinations to be redeemed as safe, and possibly because transgender individuals might feel self-congruence between their self-concept and destination personality, which can affect the destination choice of an individual (Kumar, 2016; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011; Kim et al., 2019). Either or, it might be concluded that the destination has to be known in some regards for it to be known as LGBT friendly, meaning that the destination is not novel and undiscovered like an allocentric traveler might choose their destination (Plog, 1974). This would put a transgender traveler more towards the psychocentric, or as in the updated version dependable, traveler in Plog's continuum. The risk avoidance behavior, which may be linked to neuroticism and furthermore with psychocentric traits (Jani, 2014), in destination choice would also support this claim.

As indicated by the stories, the transgender traveler often does information search about their traveling destination to determine, whether or not the destination is LGBT friendly, or even accepting of transgender people. Although not necessarily voluntary as the security and safety issues have a strong influence on this information search behavior as well, this behavior might be also viewed as a tendency to follow the rules and regulations, as they do not want their transgender background or identity to become an issue in the destination. The information search of the destinations, as well as other precaution behaviors adapted by transgender individuals when traveling (Olson & Reddy-Best, 2019), like gathering medical documents to defend their identity or hiding their identity at the airports as the study shows, can also be regarded as careful planning behavior. From the Big Five personality traits, this type of behavior could be for example linked to the trait of conscientiousness, as a person with a tendency for this personality characteristics is often organized and plans their actions accordingly, following the rules and regulations (Lounsbury et al., 2007; Gohary & Hanzaee, 2014; Jani, 2014), which could be viewed as the context in this instance as well. Furthermore, the described traits of conscientiousness comply with the description of dependable personality traits by Plog (2001). This, accompanied with the more psychocentric leaning behavior when choosing a destination, would place the transgender traveler to the group number #3: the guided in Jackson et al.'s matrix based on Plog's continuum of allo- and psychocentric travelers and the extravert-introvert scale (2001). This analysis would not only place the transgender traveler more to the psychocentric or dependable traveler side but also set them more towards the introvert side of the extra- introversion scale.

Furthermore, the narratives presented many characteristics that Plog presented in their framework for the dependable traveler (Plog, 2001). The narratives, for example, gave the impression of infrequent, or even avoiding traveling. Signs of a tourist-destination relationship were also detectable, especially in narrative N5 who frequently visited the once redeemed good destinations, also in the already mentioned perspective of preferably choosing LGBT friendly destinations. The desire to have knowingly transgender/LGBT friendly tour-operators also may be linked to the dependable traveler trait, where they select well-defined and escorted tours. Although the narratives had seemingly weak signs for the venturer traveler in sense of their destination choice and desire for adventurous activities, the theory of Big Five personality traits may also shed another light on this matter. As Jani (2014) explored, the dependable tourist personality type can for example be linked to the personality traits of conscientiousness and neuroticism because of their orderly following of rules and regulations, as well as low threshold levels for handling stress and anxiety, both qualities that may be detected from

the data set of this study as well. However, at least one narrative also explored that they were keen to see and learn of new things related to LGBT history and culture during their traveling, which may indicate signs of the openness personality trait. Openness then again may be strongly associated with the venturer traveler type, as they are seen curious and seek to learn and understand more about the world around them (Jani, 2014; Plog, 2001). Furthermore, some of the narratives also indicated coping/being alone while traveling, which may also be linked to venturer traveler (Plog, 2001). This shows how the categorization of traveler types and personalities is not black and white, and as Plog also mentions, a traveler would rarely be completely on the other end of the dependable-venturer traveler continuum (2001). It is also important to note that, in any case, every individual is different, and not all transgender persons could be categorized as the same traveler type, but from a marketing perspective it is important to also create that bigger picture through which the segment could be reached from. Nevertheless, based on this study, it would seem that the transgender traveler has more tendencies towards the dependable traveler personality.

4.2. Narrative Analysis

4.2.1. Overview of thematic narrative analysis

As an addition to qualitative content analysis, a thematic narrative analysis was also performed for the stories that were submitted for the research. Based on this analysis, four newly constructed stories were produced to underline the findings. Unlike with the qualitative content analysis, the theoretical background for the study had already at this point been defined, which also partially influenced the narrative construction.
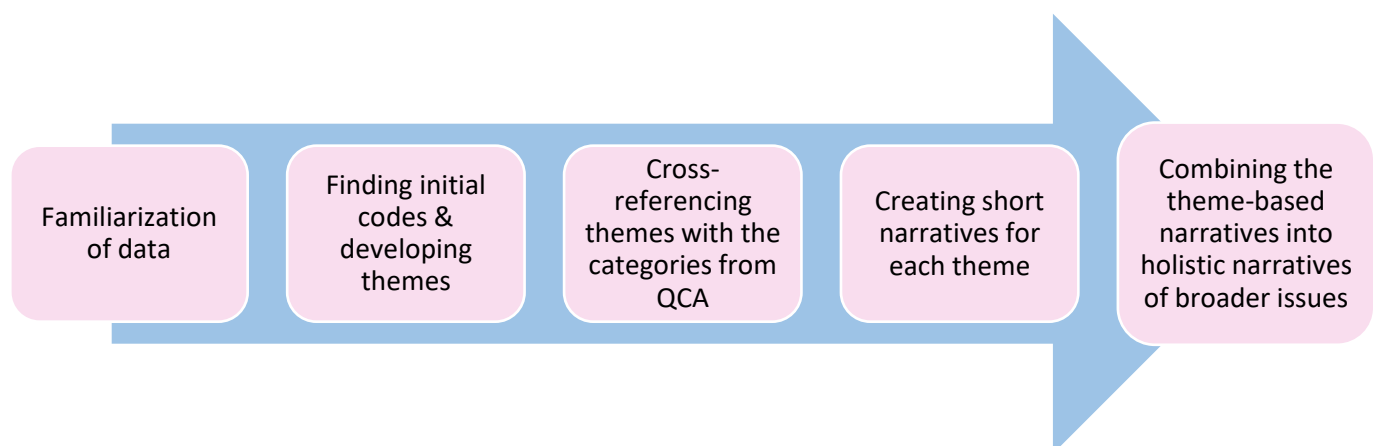

Figure 9. Illustration of the process for thematic narrative analysis.

The thematic narrative analysis was performed as illustrated in Figure 9. In order to have a more neutral approach towards the data, narratives were carefully studied again without the results of the previously performed qualitative content analysis. The themes and variety of nuances were extracted from the data again during the familiarization process, and only after the thematization stage was completed, the themes that arose from the second familiarization were cross-referenced with the categories from the qualitative content analysis. Based on this, a set of short narratives of each strong theme were constructed, and after, the short theme-based narratives were combined into holistic narratives.

When conducting the theme-based short narratives, four themes arose from the stories: destination choice, differences in traveling pre/post-transition, stress and anxiety factors combined with precaution behavior, and lastly travel in general, for example in regards of tourism activities and marketing. From this, it was decided that the stress and anxiety factors as well as precaution behavior would be integrated into the remaining themes as the subject was present in the other themes as well. The remaining themes for re-constructed narratives were *pre-transition travel*, *post-transition travel*, *destination choice,* and *travel in general*. The missing categories of *identity* and *security & safety* from the qualitative content analysis were seen to initially intertwine with these presented categories, which is why they were disregarded as a theme of their own. Especially the *identity* category was seen to be strongly intertwined across all the themes of the narrative analysis, and it came as an apparent factor in all the final re-constructed narratives. For example, in destination choice, the identity issue was shown to manifest itself regarding self-congruence and community culture feeling. The category *security & safety* from the qualitative content analysis was also seen to be intertwined across all the themed narratives, although being more subtle than the identity issue.

In the re-constructed narratives, there is a definite change occurring between the pre- and post-transition stories, which was noticeable in the original narratives as well. For the narratives, the pre- and post-transition labels are meant to indicate the level of transitioning: pre indicating the very early stages of the transition process, while post indicating the very late, or already completed transition stage. When the transition is far enough for the individual, the stress and anxiety they might have felt before about traveling lessen or even disappear almost completely. This naturally might be a result of the body changing to more gender identity matching appearance, meaning that the threat of misclassification and mistreatment decreases. However, when approaching the issue through the perspective of identity, it might also be a result of lessened gender dysphoria and being more socially

recognized and accepted in their identified gender and not seen through the scope of transgender background. (Devor, 2004). Although not directly implied in the re-constructed narratives, at least one of the original narratives indicated that the stress and anxiety felt by transgender traveler are lessened based on how comfortable they are within the transition themselves, not necessarily whether or not how fully transitioned they are (N11), as the need for transition varies by each individual (Budge, et al., 2013; Erickson-Schroth, 2014). One of the major steps in gender identity affirmation, regarding tourism as well, seems to be juridically recognized as the identified gender (Couch et al., 2008), which was also indicated by the original narratives of the study. In the re-constructed narratives, this was especially implied with the narrative of post-transition transgender traveler. Further on, while the pre-transition travel narrative focused on the difficulty of traveling as well as anxiety and stress factors related to it, the post-transition story explored the perspective of gender identity affirmation during first trips in their identified gender, as well as the gradually lessening feeling for gender affirmation later on during travel.

The pre- and post-transition narratives also reflect the stages of transgender identity formation by Devor (2004): In the pre-transition narrative, the stress and anxiety become a barrier for traveling, much like the stage 11, *transition*, in Devor's model indicates to be a possibility in daily life as well. When a transgender person then experiences their first successful and gender-affirming experiences of travel, it may be viewed that they are hindering between the stages 11 and 12, *transition* and *acceptance of post-transition gender/sex identity*. This, however, does not necessarily in this context mean that they are fully transitioned yet, as the stage 12 suggests, but they are receiving the first experiences of, as Devor implies, *gender euphoria*, meaning that they are affirmed of their gender and feel comfortable presenting themselves as the identified gender also in the social environment. As the transgender person moves forward with the transition, they reach stage 13, *integration*, which is implied to be the stage of transition in the post-transition narrative as well. During this stage, the person has successfully adapted to the identified gender and integrated to the society at large, and the importance of identity through transgenderism decreases. (Devor, 2004). This can be also seen in the decreased need for gender affirmation when traveling in the post-transition narrative.

Although argued that LGBT travelers should not be treated as one homogenous group, but rather as divided into separate segments of their own (Guaracino & Salvato, 2017; UNWTO, 2017), the LGBT segment as a whole may still be seen to act as a community through the sharing of values, knowledge, communication, and experiences (Londoño, 2017). This notion comes through in the narratives three (destination choice) and four (travel in general) as well; the destination may be chosen not only

because the LGBT friendly atmosphere creates a feeling of safety, but also because the personality/identity of the destination resonates with the self-concept and identity of the transgender traveler as well, hence self-congruity with the destination is found. The restrains of destination choice have been recognized in LGBT sub-segments, such as gay men, as well (Hughes, 2002), which is also why further exploration on the importance of destination was seen as fit for the narrative analysis.

The reconstructed narratives are also affirming of the theoretical perspective of the qualitative content analysis. As seen in story 1, narrating the pre-transition traveling, the transgender individual would not necessarily travel for leisure at all, but only when it is required of them, for example, a work trip abroad. The infrequent traveling patterns, or even avoidance of travel, indicate the transgender traveler to belong more towards the dependable traveler personality (Plog, 2001), as already presented for the qualitative content analysis. The story presents the same type of personality characteristics as found in the previous analysis as well to support this claim, such as cautiousness, low neuroticism threshold, following rules and regulations, and so on. However, interestingly other than choosing an LGBT friendly destination, which is seen as a more psychocentric destination choice in this study, the post-transition narrative does not necessarily show as many signs of dependable personality characteristics any longer. This might be an indication that certain aspects of travel behavior change through the transition journey of being transgender. This notion would challenge the stability of psychographics, as personality is not seen to change over time (Plog, 2001).

4.2.2. Narrative 1: Pre-transition travel

Travelling makes me anxious, so I do not travel unless it is absolutely necessary. I do not like the situation it puts me in, especially now as I am starting my transition journey. I feel annoyed that because of the way I identify myself, so many things in my life are difficult, like traveling. I have not even gotten a passport yet, since I feel like my options for traveling are so limited. I would only travel to countries that I know to be safe, but I rarely think of holiday traveling anyway. I would not ever travel to somewhere, that I know being a transgender individual is illegal or frowned upon because then I simply would not feel safe or could even enjoy the travel. Especially airport security checks, and basically anywhere I would need to present my identification documents which are still showcasing the wrong gender, I would feel extremely anxious. All the precautions I would need to take; gathering documents to explain the incongruence of my gender identity/expression and juridical gender (like a statement from a doctor that I am a transgender person), traveling with hormones and other transgender things (like binder and packers), possibly need to hide my identity (for example at the airport), the information search of the destination and everything. All that just makes it so difficult for me, and that accompanied with the threat of misgendering or other mistreatment, I just do not desire to travel. Maybe once I am a bit further away in transition and can present myself more as who I really am, traveling could be an option, as long as I would still know it to be completely safe. Maybe in the future, there will also be more LGBT forwarded tour operators and such in LGBT destinations, because all types of signs about human rights and equality issues do make me feel more comfortable and safer in spaces and situations. So, something like that might really make me desire traveling in the future.

4.2.3. Narrative 2: Post-transition travel

As I have gone further along with the transition, traveling has become more normal for me again as well. During pre-transition I did not travel that much. I, however, remember how empowering the first times traveling abroad were when I had started to transition. There was, of course, some hassle still, like navigating at airports with the security, need to have all the paperwork about my background with me in case someone would question my identity and all. But, once I got to the destination and I was able to present myself as who I am, that was the most freeing feeling ever. And, not being around people who know your transgender background, and only being viewed as a male rather than as "transgender", that was the most wonderful feeling ever! As I have moved further along the transition, the need to get that validation of my gender identity seems to have lessened, but it is still delightful when it happens. But it is not the thing I constantly think about when traveling. I really just want the same experience of traveling as anyone else too; if I go to relax – I want to relax, if I go on more active holiday – I want to do activities, and so on. After I got my transition completed to the point where I am comfortable in my body, as well as changed my gender juridically, I rarely anymore stress travel through the issue of being a transgender person. I, of course, still need to make sure I am traveling to places which are trans- and LGBT-friendly, since the chance of mistreatment or even misgendering still exists. I also do not want to support destinations where transgenderism would be illegal or punishable, even if my own transgender background does not show any longer.

4.2.4. Narrative 3: Destination choice

If I am thinking about traveling to a new destination that I have not visited before, I always first need to check that the destination is LGBT friendly and they have a good reputation and history regarding LGBT or human rights in general. For example, if the destination has had a Pride event before, I would know that it is a safer choice already. The LGBT friendliness and acceptance bring a certain level of security and safety feeling, which I need in order to relax and really enjoy myself during traveling. There are still so many places around the world where being LGBT, let alone being a transgender person, is frowned upon, or even illegal, so I would never travel to countries like that. I do not want my gender background to be an issue that would put me in danger during traveling and I would never knowingly travel to a country where I needed to hide or be ashamed of my identity: I have fought long and hard to be where I am today. It can also be difficult to find destinations, that are both affordable and safe for me to travel to, for example, Eastern Europe. The world just simply is not as open to me like it is for the cis-gendered people, there are many places where because of my identity I am forbidden to exist. Sometimes that makes me feel bitter, as some cis-gendered people do not realize that as a problem. When a destination is known as LGBT friendly and accepting, I feel like I'm more in a safe place, and possibly with likeminded people too. If possible, I even go for tour operators known for their work with transgender people, for some extra security. However, I do not necessarily view choosing LGBT friendly destinations as a bad thing: I do not mind embracing that community feeling during travel. For example, LGBT museums and historical sights are interesting to me and I might often go searching for such in the destination. Being part of the LGBT community is not something I need to necessarily escape during my travel, and I can enjoy being in an LGBT destination/surrounding as I can embrace my identity there without being judged. But it is still a shame, that so many countries do not accept me as who I am.

4.2.5. Narrative 4: Travel in general (activities, marketing)

I enjoy traveling but feel that I have so many limitations regarding traveling, which makes it significantly more difficult than for a cis-gendered person. For example, I could maybe enjoy going to a spa or public swimming pools/areas, but I cannot because my transition is not full, and my genitalia does not comply with my gender. If I would go to a spa, where I needed to choose dressing rooms between male or female with no possibility to change to swimming gear in private, I could not go to the gender-specific dressing room that I feel like I belong to, because my genitalia is not accepted in that area. It is the same problem as with bathrooms, which is, unfortunately, a normal struggle for me whenever in public spaces. It would great to have a break from those types of struggles when traveling, and it could be accomplished with more tailored products, destinations, and companies willing to adapt towards gender neutrality and acceptance of transgenders. It's about accessibility, really. It is also unfortunate how the LGBT tourism market seems to still be falling under the pretense that it is just all about gay tourism, and further on gay sex tourism. We seek just the same type of experiences as everyone else. Relaxation, and so on. LGBT market is not just a big block of the same type of travelers, even if we have similar views and values, and appreciate acceptance, and so on. We have diverse needs.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1. Main findings

The purpose of this study was to examine the travel behavior of transgender individuals from an inductive perspective in order to gain a deeper understanding of the traveler segment. The main research question *How does being a transgender individual influence travel/tourist behavior?* was after initial data analysis largely approached from the perspective of identity, self-concept, and personality. Identities may play a critical role in our traveling choices and tourist behavior (Hibbert et al., 2013), and for a transgender person, the importance of being recognized and accepted as who they identify to be is crucially important (Devor, 2004; Diamond et al., 2011), which may be seen through the perspective of tourism from the findings of this study as well. The conclusions of the study regarding the research questions may be examined in Figure 10.

Main research question: *How does being a transgender individual influence travel/tourist behavior?*

- Practical implications:
 - Safety & Security
  - Precaution behavior
  - Destination choice (safe space to enter)
 - Stress & Anxiety
  - Avoidance behavior
- In reflection to identity
 - Destination choice (self-congruence)
 - Identity affirmation & acceptance
- Differences in pre- and post-transition

- The study mostly affirms and complies with the theory of transgender experiences of travel by Olson and Reddy-Best (2019)

What type of decisions does a transgender person make in regarding traveling?

- Avoidance behaviors
- Destination choice (accepting of LGBT/trans)
- Travel or not to travel?

How does a transgender person experience/see traveling?

- Transgender individuals often feel heightened amount of stress & anxiety regarding travel
 - Differences in pre- and post-transition
- Travelling may be regarded as not as important --> and not as easy as for cis-gender
 - 'Travelling only when absolutely necessary'
- May be seen as a identity affirming experience -> being able to 'be who they truly are' in destination where their transgender background is not known

Figure 10. Findings presented based on the research questions.

The findings of this study affirm the previous studies of transgender people in tourism context by Olson and Reddy-Best (2019), as well as Monterrubio et al. (2020). If examining the study through the perspective of Olson and Reddy-Best's (2019) theory relating to transgender experiences of traveling, all of the three categories and their subcategories (Figure 2) were present in the data, at least on some level. As Olson and Reddy-Best present, transgender individuals feel a great amount of stress and anxiety related to travel, adapt avoidance, and pre-cautious behaviors such a purposefully hiding their identity or avoiding air traveling and face mistreatment in tourism setting, for example in form of misgendering. However, they also present that transgender individuals may experience positive outcomes of traveling, as they feel accepted and welcomed in tourism-related environments, as well as when awareness and recognition of the validity of their identity is formed. (Olson & Reddy-Best, 2019). Especially these results were affirmed in the current study, accompanied with the perspective of safety and security, which also intertwines with the pre-cautious behavior and fear and anxiety categories, the first assertation of Olson and Reddy-Best's theory. The first assertation was also affirmed in Monterrubio et al.'s (2020) study of trans women motivations and experiences of travel, which is why the findings of this study may also be regarded as relevant for the traveler segment.

On contradictory, Monterrubio et al.'s (2020) study did not find affirmation for Olson and Reddy-Best second and third assertation in experiences of travel with transgender individuals; the second assertation being that transgender individuals may hide their gender background and identity to have uninterrupted travel and third assertation being that transgender awareness and acceptance by cis-gendered people while traveling may result in positive experiences. However, the findings of this study would seem to affirm these two assertations as well. For example, one of the narratives directly indicated behaviors where the storyteller had purposefully presented as their wrong gender at the airport to avoid trouble of not complying with their identification documents (N6). Regarding the third assertation, the data for this study showed multiple references to the importance of transgender, or in general LGBT, acceptance, and awareness in tourism companies and destinations, and these results may be regarded as affirming of Olson and Reddy-Best's theory. However, it is important to note that the study at hand focused more on the travel behavior of transgender individuals, rather than solely experiences of travel itself, which is why the results of this study from this perspective cannot be regarded as fully affirming of the theory. Nevertheless, it would appear that Olson and Reddy-Best's (2019) theory holds its ground on some level, but more empirical studies are also needed to refine and test the theory further.

As the study performed was inductive, the theoretical background for the study was largely defined after the first initial view of the data, the qualitative content analysis. The three categories that largely rose from the data were *safety and security*, *stress and anxiety,* and lastly *identity*. Since the subject of gender identity and identity, in general, is such an important part of the transgender experience (Diamond et al., 2011; Roen, 2002; Nagoshi & Brzuzy, 2010), as well as the subject seeming to be largely intertwined across all the three categories presented, the perspective of identity in relation to travel behavior was decided as the theoretical perspective for the study. Furthermore, to extensively examine travel behavior from this perspective, identity was related to the self-concept, and further on to personality, in the context of consumer, and travel, behavior.

Because of the security and safety issues related to being transgender and the mistreatment as well as violence they face (Lombardi et al, 2001; Moran & Sharpe, 2004), it may be even regarded that the identity of a transgender person becomes a barrier for traveling. This would especially be the case during pre- or early transition, where an individual does not necessarily yet pass with their physical appearance as the gender they identify with. Hence, transgender individuals feel stress, anxiety, and even fear during traveling because of the possibility of their gender identity background being revealed or being mistreated for being a transgender person, as this study would indicate. However, as proposed by the study as well, when a transgender person does travel, they often search for LGBT friendly destinations or even engage in LGBT related activities. Although the destination choice was often presented from the perspective of security and safety, the reason for choosing knowingly LGBT friendly destinations may also be a result of expressing one's identity (Hibbert et al., 2013), as a transgender person would possibly feel belonging to LGBT community at large. One narrative (N6) also explored the fact of themselves fully being able to emerge to their rightful gender identity during traveling, something which they could not necessarily accomplish in a daily life setting. This could be considered as a clear implication of traveling being an identity affirming experience for them (Haggard & Williams, 1992; Thurlow & Jaworski, 2006). The importance of identity affirmation was also detected in other narratives, either directly implied or indirectly referred to. Especially in cases like presented by N6, where a transgender person faces transphobia and mistreatment in their daily life, but can escape that in the destination where no one knows their background and they can present as who they are freely, gender affirmation when traveling seems to be an extremely positive experience and an important factor for transgender individuals. However, as the study at hand concentrated on experiences of travel behavior, identity affirmation as a motivational factor for traveling could not be explored, but previous studies would suggest that gender affirmation is not a push factor in the context of traveling for transgender individuals (Monterrubio et al., 2020; Olson &

Reddy-Best, 2019). Identity/gender affirmation, however, has been argued to be an important source of positive experiences of traveling (Olson & Reddy-Best, 2019), which is affirmed by this study as well.

In this study, the perspective of personality affecting travel behavior was widely approached using Stanley Plog's (1974) seminal work of psycho-allocentric destination/traveler. Furthermore, Plog's updated (2001) model of the classic, dependable-venturer traveler and the thorough descriptions of the two personality types were used to gain a deeper understanding, what type of traveler the transgender tourist is. Relating to the security and safety threats transgender individuals might feel during traveling, the data indicates that they are more cautious and need to plan their travels carefully and are generally somewhat anxious about travel situations due to their gender background. This is especially the case with early and pre-transition transgender individuals. These traits may be connected to the dependable traveler personality, or at least indicate belonging to more of the dependable site of the continuum. Furthermore, the analysis indicates that there might be signs of conscientiousness (planning behavior, orderly following of rules) and neuroticism (the low threshold for feelings of anxiety and stress) from the Big Five Personality traits, which have been argued to refer to the dependable traveler (Jani, 2014). The data also showed, especially in early and pre-transition transgender individuals, infrequent travel patterns, or even avoidance of traveling altogether, which may also be linked to the dependable traveler personality. However, on contradiction, some of the narratives also showed possible signs of the venturer traveler traits, such as openness, in form of desire to experience and learn during traveling. In the original narratives, the nuances between stories told from perspectives of the pre- or post-transition traveling experiences also indicated slight changes in traveler personality types, which was further explored in the narrative analysis, where the re-constructed stories indicated this possible change as well.

As can be argued, unlike identity that is prone to variation (Vignoles et al., 2011), personality is rather stable throughout the lifetime of an individual (McCrae & John, 1992; Plog, 2001), but the notion of transgender travel behavior changing through their transition journey would challenge the stability of Plog's psychographic segmentation. As it has been indicated that the psychographics do not necessarily stay stable in certain situations of travel behavior (Park & Jang, 2014), the reformation of identity in transgender individuals might also affect their travel behavior in the relation of psychographics, possibly only temporarily. This might, for example, mean that if a transgender person has been more towards the venturer side of the tourist personality continuum before the realization of their gender confusion, they move more towards the center or even dependable side as they become

aware of their transgenderism and enter the transition stage for identity reformation. Once the individual is fully comfortable in social setting in their new identity, they might return to their original positioning on the continuum. However, with the data of this study, it is impossible to say whether or not this would be true, but it is rather presented as an exploration for possible future research.

Furthermore, Plog's psycho-allocentric model allowed analyzing the data from the perspective of destination choice. The overall analysis of the destination choice was that transgender individuals often choose and seek for LGBT friendly destinations. As argued before, although this presented in the data as a safety precaution, it may also be seen as that choosing LGBT friendly destination resonates with the transgender traveler, creating the feeling of self-congruence that pushes them to choose the destination (Kumar, 2016; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011; Sirgy & Su, 2000). Whether this interpretation is true or not, the destination choice may still be analyzed from the perspective of Plog's continuum. As Plog argues, destinations move along the psycho-allocentric continuum based on their popularity: new, novel and unknown destinations are on the allocentric side, and if they become more popular and known for the masses, they develop to become more psychocentric destination (1974). Based on this, one might argue, that a destination that is known to be LGBT friendly has to be a known destination on some level, meaning that from this perspective, the destination would be leaning more towards the psychocentric side of the continuum. However, it has to be noted, that within the bigger picture, an LGBT friendly destination does not necessarily fall to the psychocentric side of the continuum. For example, Finland may be regarded as an LGBT friendly and accepting destination (ILGA Europe, 2020), but northern Europe may be seen as more of an allocentric forwarded destination, although more towards the middle of the continuum (Plog, 2001). Nevertheless, from the perspective of this study, it could be argued that an LGBT friendly destination may fall to the more psychocentric side, or at least somewhere around the middle, of the continuum. It has to be noted, however, that the study at hand did not seek to find an understanding of destination characteristics, but this view was formed as a result of examining the transgender traveler. With this notion about the destination, the transgender traveler would be furthermore placed more towards the dependable traveler personality.

As a conclusion, this study mostly affirms the previously presented theory of transgender travel experience by Olson and Reddy-Best (2019). Transgender travel behavior is largely affected by their concerns of security and safety, anxiety while traveling, and the meaning of their identity being recognized and accepted by others. Furthermore, the meaning of identity is rather central in transgender travel behavior, especially in the early stages of transitioning and adapting to new gender

identity. Based on their level of cautiousness, destination, and travel choices, a transgender traveler personality might be leaning more towards the dependable traveler side on Plog's (2001) continuum of dependable-venturer travel personality. However, because of the qualitative nature of this study, the findings can only be regarded as interpretations of the data, and the results cannot be generalized. Nevertheless, the findings of the study present an interesting perspective towards the transgender traveler segment and deepen the understanding of their special implications regarding travel behavior. The gained understanding and proposed implications of the traveler behavior of the transgender segment, as well as affirmation of Olson and Reddy-Best's (2019) theory of transgender individual's experiences of travel, may be seen as the main theoretical contribution of the study.

5.2. Managerial implications

Tran et al. (2015) argued in their study that tourism companies in the recreation sector experience revenue losses if they do not assess their potential customer's personality factors influencing consumer behavior. Whether or not this is true, there is no arguing that understanding consumer, and travel/tourist, behavior is an important factor for marketing tourism products, destinations, activities, and so on (Swarbrooke & Horner, 2004). As the transgender traveler segment is still a very under-researched customer segment in eyes of tourism (UNWTO, 2017; Monterrubio et al., 2020; Olson & Reddy-Best, 2019), the study at hand can be presented holding some significant managerial implications.

Even if the analysis based on Plog's model of dependable-venturer traveler, and psycho-allocentric destination, cannot be generalized or confirmed in this study of its reliability, the findings still may hold significant value in understanding the transgender traveler. The finding of differences in early/pre-transition and post-transition traveling, which was especially apparent in the narrative analysis, for example, show, that travel behavior may change depending on the level of transitioning in transgender people. This further on could mean that the customer segment already in itself has diverse needs, which should be addressed when marketing for the traveler group.

Another significant managerial notion that came through from the study was the call out for more LGBT, and even more specific transgender, influences in tourism businesses. The need for education and training regarding of facing and accepting LGBT customers came apparent from both analyses. It was seen important, that the LGBT friendliness of the destination is not the only positive attribute

in regards of LGBT travelers, but also that the tourism companies, like tour operators, accommodations, activity companies, and so on, blow into the same fire to ensure the safety and security, and furthermore positive tourism experiences, for transgender, and other LGBT, tourists. The need for more transgender forwarded tourism businesses, in all industry sectors, was also called out for, which may be regarded as a major managerial implication of the study.

5.3. Evaluation of the study

In qualitative studies, the matter of reliability and validity of the study is approached from the perspective of trustworthiness. Trustworthiness, then again is divided into four different aspects: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Decrop, 1999). For the following part of the study, these aspects are analyzed to establish the degree of trustworthiness of the study.

Credibility – Researcher is familiar with the topic and has successfully obtained data that supports the research claims, truthfulness of data (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Decrop, 1999)

As the study was performed as an inductive study, the final theoretical background was not determined until the first initial data analysis. While the researcher was familiar with consumer behavior research from the perspective of tourism, the aspect of identity and personality factors influencing consumer behavior was not as familiar. The study subject, transgender travelers, was also not as familiar topic for the researcher from a theoretical point of view, which opposed challenges for the study. However, these challenges were overcome with extensive familiarization with the topic prior to starting the research. Another way of increasing the credibility of the study is to present direct quotations from the participants of the study when examining the findings (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Decrop, 1999), which was used widely in this study as well. However, the possibility of another researcher with more experience from both perspectives to the study making different conclusions based on the data cannot be overruled.

Transferability – Researcher's responsibility to the degree of similarity and connections of the research in question and previous research by other authors, the applicability of findings (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Decrop, 1999)

Previous research concerning the topic was very limited, which is why the inductive approach to the subject was utilized. However, Olson and Reddy-Best's (2019) research on experiences of travel with the transgender segment created the ground for the research, and their theory was utilized in examining the trustworthiness of the study at hand. The similarities concerning the findings of this study, and the study by Olson and Reddy-Best, would suggest that the results of this research are relevant, hence increasing the transferability and trustworthiness of the study.

Dependability – Researcher's responsibility to offer relevant information to the reader in a way that the findings are logical, traceable, and documented, findings are consistent and reproducible (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Decrop, 1999)

In the study, two different data analysis methods were used, which both resulted in similar findings, which would indicate good dependability of the study. However, as explored before the findings might have differed if performed by another researcher with more experience of the topics at hand. The consistency of the results with previous research (Olson & Reddy-Best, 2019), however, might yet again increase the trustworthiness of the research, when examining the subject from the view of dependability.

Conformability – Finding connections between the data and interpretations, the neutrality of the interpretation (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Decrop, 1999)

Findings are attempted to be presented in logical and easy to follow order so that the theoretical perspective on the findings is also easily understandable. The connection of data and the interpretation was often illustrated with direct quotations from the narratives, which may be seen as increasing of conformability. The interpretation of the data is kept on a neutral level, for which the novelty of the transgender segment as a research subject was a benefit for the researcher. However, the possible mistakes in interpretation cannot be taken lightly, as already explored previously in this paper.

In order to increase the trustworthiness of the research, both qualitative content analysis, as well as narrative analysis were used in examining the data. Using two different data analysis methods may be regarded as a method of triangulation (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). However, as seen from the two different analysis methods, the issues that were presented varied slightly. During the qualitative content analysis, the open coding procedure overlooked the importance of LGBT friendly destination choice, as it was often linked to the security and safety aspect. During the thematic narrative analysis,

the behavior of choosing LGBT friendly/accepting destinations arose as a theme of its own, although heavily still influenced by the security and safety, as well as identity, aspects. Another noticeable difference was the missing of identity category in the themes, but this is explained by that it was so intertwined and central to many aspects of travel within the issues presented in the original narratives, that it would have been difficult to re-narrate as its own theme. Therefore, the identity, as well as the security and safety, categories were heavily influencing the re-constructed narratives, but are not presented as themes of their own. To conclude, the combination of qualitative content and the thematic narrative analysis discovered similar types of findings within the data, but through different lenses, which further deepened the understanding of the study subject.

This research does not pose without limitations. As the study was focused on Finnish transgender individuals, the data collection was conducted in Finnish and then translated to English for the study, whenever quoting from the narratives. This may pose the threat of the language used in the narratives to lose some of its richness, and further on damper with the data analysis. Especially when studying identity and transgender, language is an important aspect of the analysis, which may have been affected during the translation process (Vincent, 2018; Järviluoma, Vilkko, & Moisala, 2003). This has been taken into consideration during translation, and the quotations used in the study are translated as closely as possible to the original statement in a neutral manner. Neutrally translating the text may lose some of the textual nuances, for example dialects, but this was not seen as a problem for the current study. Another limitation was also focused on language, that appeared after the data collection. This problem was found from the narrative request: The request stated, in Finnish, that the study called out for participators of adult transgender people. The definition of transgender (transsukupuolinen) in Finnish means a person whose gender does not comply with their identified gender, mostly referring to the transgender people who still identify within the binary gender roles, male or female. As it was seen to overly complicate the narrative request, and it was assumed that simply using the Finnish terminology was enough to emphasize to who the study was meant for. However, because of the diverse definitions transgender people use of themselves, at least one non-binary person had filled the narrative. Although this was not originally aimed for because of the recommendation by Olson and Reddy-Best (2019), as their results indicated that non-binary and binary transgender individuals might have very different perspectives on traveling, this limitation was not seen as big of a problem for this study. All the narratives were in line with each other and presented the same findings, which is why it was also decided not to eliminate any of the narratives for the analysis. Furthermore, another limitation can be based on the study subject, transgender individuals, themselves, as they can be viewed as hard to reach subject group. This is directly reflected in the quite

low response rate; however, the narratives were fairly rich and informative, and the data analysis was able to be performed even with the small data set. Based on this, it might be concluded that the narrative approach to this study was a success.

5.4. Future research

The findings of the study also propose multiple interesting perspectives for future research. Without a doubt, studying the LGBT, and more closely the transgender traveler, sector is called out for, since the current understanding of the segment at large is widely based on outdated information and research on gay travelers, and also the gay traveler segment has evolved since (Southall & Fallon, 2011; UNWTO, 2017). If examining the findings of this study from the broader perspective, the nature and personality of LGBT destinations, for example, should be studied in the future to gain a deeper understanding of what type of destinations these are, and what are their key characteristics. This would further help to gain a more holistic understanding of how to market the destinations to certain LGBT segments and traveler profiles. This, naturally, would also mean that more research is needed in covering all the segments, and the differences within the segments, of LGBT travelers.

However, if concentrating on the transgender traveler only, the study proposes several future research prospects as well. As the transgender segment is so widely under-researched still, there is a lot to cover. The proposed differences between the pre- and post-transition transgender travelers should be studied from both quantitative, and further qualitative perspectives, as the study at hand, only scraped the surface on the subject. The nature of transgender traveler identities and personality would also be an interesting study subject, on a bigger and more precise scale than what was utilized in this study. The relationship of gender identity affirmation and traveling should also be explored further, during what stages of the transgender experience the need for affirmation is at the highest, and when it starts to decrease, or does it decrease as proposed in this study. Future research paths could also include transgender information search behavior regarding tourism, as the segment seems to utilize information search as pre-cautioun behavior. Understanding the information search behavioral patterns could further help tourism businesses and destinations to understand better, how the traveler segment could be reached in marketing.

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Tutkimus: Transsukupuolisten matkailukäyttäytyminen

Tämän pro-gradu tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on kerätä ja analysoida tietoa siitä, miten transsukupuolinen ihminen tekee valintoja liittyen matkailuun ja matkustamiseen ylipäätään. Tutkimus on laadullinen ja pyrkii syventämään tietoa siitä, millainen asiakasryhmä transsukupuoliset ovat matkailualalle.

Tutkimuksessa kerätään anonyymejä narratiiveja, eli kertomuksia/tarinoita. Voit kirjoittaa tarinasi alla olevaan kysymyskenttään. Kirjoittaa voit niin laajasti tai suppeasti kuin haluat: tämä on sinun tarinasi. Tärkeää kuitenkin olisi, että keskityt tarinassasi käsittelemään matkailukäyttäytymistäsi; tämä tarkoittaa sitä, että kirjoitat erinäisistä matkustamiseesi liittyvistä seikoista, kuten esimerkiksi miten etsit tietoa ennen matkaa, miten tuntemuksesi vaikuttavat matkasuunnitelmiisi, miten mahdollisesti valmistelet matkaa ennakkoon, sen aikana ja jälkeen, ja niin edelleen. Kirjoita niistä asioista, jotka tunnet sinulle tärkeiksi ja oleellisiksi.

Voit osallistua ja jättää tarinasi jos:

1) Olet yli 18 vuotias transsukupuolinen ja olet tehnyt matkustussuunnitelmia yksin. Sinun ei ole tarvinnut matkustaa yksin, mutta tarkoituksena on tietää miten sinä teet matkasuunnitelmiasi ja minkälaista sinun matkailukäyttäytymisesi on. Matkailukäyttäytymisellä viitataan esimerkiksi siihen, millaisia valintoja teet matkakohteesi, aktiviteettien, majoittumisen, matkustamisen jne. suhteen tai miten etsit tietoa kohteista ennen matkapäätöksen tekoa.

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2) Olet yli 18 vuotias transsukupuolinen ja voisit haluta matkustaa, mutta et ole matkustanut syystä tai toisesta liittyen tilanteeseesi transsukupuolisena. Syy voi olla esimerkiksi pelon tai ahdistuksen tunne matkustamiseen suhteen, tai muuten esiintyvä matkustamisen vaikeus.

Kertomukset ovat vapaamuotoisia, niillä ei ole minimi tai maksimi sanamääriä tai tarkkaa mittaa siitä, mitä kaikkia asioita sinun pitäisi tarinassasi käsitellä. Tärkeintä on, että se liittyy matkustamiseesi. Voit esimerkiksi kirjoittaa yleisesti matkustuskokemuksistasi transsukupuolisena ihmisenä, kertoa yhden matkasi tarinan mikä vaikutti matkailukäyttäytymiseesi myöhemmin, tai kertoa yleisesti haasteista mitä koet matkustamiseen liittyen ja mikä voi vaikuttaa matkailukäyttäytymiseesi.

Voit lähteä ajattelemaan tarinasi muodostusta esimerkiksi näiden kysymyksien avulla:

Mitä otat huomioon ennen matkalle lähtöä? Esimerkiksi kohdetiedot, mitä tarvitset matkalle, miten ottaa huomioon turvatarkastukset, miten toimit lentokentällä jne.
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Mitkä asiat vaikuttavat päätöksen tekoosi?
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Joudutko tekemään erikoisjärjestelyjä matkaasi varten?
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Minkälaisia tuntemuksia koet/olet kokenut matkastasi/matkasi aikana/mistä? (pelko, stressi, helpotus tms.) Esimerkiksi tunnetko stressiä lentokentällä, turvatarkastuksissa tai pelkoa kohteessa liikkuessa, vai tunnetko helpotusta kohteeseen päästyäsi. Miten tämä vaikuttaa käyttäytymiseesi matkalla?
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Etsitkö tietoa matkaasi liittyen? Minkälaista tietoa? Miten/Mistä etsit tietoa? Esimerkiksi etsitkö vertaistuen tyyppistä tietoa, vinkkejä matkustamiseesi liittyen tms. Etsitkö tietoa internetistä, vai jotenkin muuten?
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Minkälaisena asiana koet matkailun transsukupuolisena henkilönä?

Mikäli kirjoitat tarinaasi ei-matkustavana transsukupuolisena, voit lähteä miettimään tarinasi muodostusta myös näiden kysymysten perusteella:

Mikä estää matkustamistasi?
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Minkälaisia tuntemuksia ajatus matkustamisesta sinussa herättää?
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Mikä voisi saada sinut matkustamaan tulevaisuudessa?

Tutkimukseen voi osallistua asuinpaikkaan, seksuaalisuuteen tai muihin yksilöllisiin ominaisuuksiin katsomatta (paitsi täysi-ikäisyys); tärkeintä on, että olet transsukupuolisena matkustanut ja tehnyt itse matkasuunnitelmasi. Sinun ei tarvitse jättää tietojasi transsukupuolisuuteesi liittyen, mutta halutessasi voit myös avata tilannettasi mikäli koet sen oleelliseksi tiedoksi.

Vastauslomake on auki aina 16.07.2020 saakka. Mikäli lomake ilmoittaa vastauksesi olevan liian pitkä, voit täyttää kyselyn uudelleen. Tällaisessa tapauksessa ilmoitathan tarinasi jatkumisessa useassa vastauksessa. Muistathan myös lähettää vastauksen ennen kyselylomakkeen sulkemista!
Suuret kiitokset jo näin etukäteen tutkimukseen osallistumisesta!

Kertomuksesi jättäminen on tämän lomakkeen kautta täysin anonyymiä, eikä sinun tarvitse jättää mitään tunnistavia tietoja itsestäsi. Mikäli kuitenkin jokin jäi askarruttamaan tutkimukseen liittyen, minuun voi olla yhteydessä sähköpostilla. Yhteystietoni löydät alta.

Kiittäen,

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