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Taking a guilt trip? How guilt and shame shape the tourism consumption experiences of female travellers – a phenomenological approach

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Abstract

In recent years, the global public and academic discussions on the concerns of climate crisis, global pandemic and human rights issues to name a few have saturated also the topic of leisurely travel and become symptomatic in controlling tourism consumption. In addition to the concrete and provenly deteriorating impact of travel towards the environment, the negative social implications of travelling have not gone unnoticed. Whereas travelling used to be considered a leisurely pastime, it would now seem that, at least for some consumers, it has become a moral burden. Correspondingly, the emotional responses and thus the experiences related to travel are bound to change. In travel context and tied to the sense of morale, the predominately negatively perceived self-conscious emotions of guilt and shame may be alien but an important topic of discussion.

By applying the methodology of hermeneutic phenomenology and the interpretative phenomenological approach, this study aims to examine how travel-related guilt and shame shape the tourism consumption experiences of female travellers. In using the hermeneutic phenomenology as the theoretical perspective to guide the interpretation and analysis of the research data, the shared experiences can be seen to gain the implied contextual features of an experience. As a result, a more thorough understanding of the phenomenon can be achieved. The study utilises the method of semi-structured interviews in gaining insight about the travel-related experiences of guilt and shame shared by Finnish female travellers.

The study findings indicate that in tourism context, the experiences of the self-conscious emotions of guilt and shame are extremely multi-levelled and experientially rich. The findings also illustrate an evident contradiction between the values, the triggers of guilt and shame as well as the consequent behaviour shared by the interviewees. Additionally, the confessionals highlight that a range of different resistance techniques is used to justify the lack of change in behaviour. In the context of this study, guilt and shame can be found to be weak forces of change in the consumption behaviour of Finnish female travellers in tourism. However, while lacking the rigour to alter the order of consumption altogether, these self-conscious emotions prove to have the constructive capability to facilitate a change in thinking and raising awareness.

Keywords: shame, guilt, phenomenology, female travellers, travel consumption

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1 INTRODUCTION

A major shift has occurred in the nature of tourism consumption, from a pastime to almost a burden. The expansion of the internet and the increase in worldly connectivity both online and offline have facilitated access to new research, information and worldviews. Individual consumption habits and decisions are under scrutiny and not far from being regarded as political statements. Travel used to be valuable social currency, whereas now it would appear to become a matter of conflict. The global discussion on the ever-important concerns on climate crisis, global pandemic and human rights issues have saturated the topic of leisurely travel. These factors have become significant and indicative in controlling tourism consumption. Leisurely has become guilty. Media publications released in 2020-2021 titled such as "Going on holiday during the pandemic – it's just one big guilt trip" (Mahdawi, 2020), "Will I ever be able to fly again without feeling guilty?" (Hooker, 2021), "Should I Feel Guilty for Wanting to Travel Right Now?" (Spurrell, 2020), "Shhh! We're Heading Off on Vacation" (Firshein, 2020) and "Traveling was once social currency. Now it might get you shamed." (Compton, 2020) reveal a rightful concern on the changed landscape that is travel. To put it bluntly, the focus has shifted from the responsibility aspects of travel to the question whether it is responsible to travel at all.

Referring to ignorance as bliss would be rather unintelligent given the context, but as we're continuously exposed to the ever-expanding discourse on consumption and its social, economic and ecological impacts on tourism destinations, mentally detaching ourselves from our own leisurely consumption practises might seem like a plausible option. However, the prevalent human emotions of guilt and shame would hardly allow us to do so. The crossfire of morals causes perceptions of both right and wrong as well as good and bad to take on several different meanings and manifestations. The conception of either moral wrong or right-doing can be regarded as the baseline for feelings of guilt and shame. But what exactly is the role of these emotions in shifting, altering and shaping our consumption experiences and practises?

The predominant discussion in both public and academic arenas highlight the significance and importance of more responsible and sustainable consumption practises and behaviour related to travel in order to maintain the integrity of destinations and to allow for both local and international ethical considerations the visibility they deserve. As a result, from

increased consideration for both the positive and negative impacts of tourism, responsible tourism has emerged as a significant market trend in the field. Several motivations influence consumer purchase choice and Goodwin and Francis (2003, p. 282) argue that while consumer choice is constrained by price and availability, the responsible elements of a tourism product have become a significant part. While the responsibility aspect has a sincere intention in bettering the conditions it is dealing with and shifting consumer behaviour towards more ethically favourable actions, using guilt-tripping both in commercial and public discourse has become a useful tool in if not navigating then at least disrupting consumption.

The responsibility perspective is also widespread in relation to tourism research on guilt and shame. While guilt and shame are not new emotions in the context of tourism, the current body of research has mainly focused on the environmental or ecological aspects of guilt and shame (Mkono & Hughes, 2020; see also Cohen, Higham & Cavaliere, 2011; Kroesen, 2013; Reis & Higham, 2017; Young, Higham & Reis, 2014), guilt in affecting behavioural intent (Mattila, Hanks & Zhang, 2013), consumer financial guilt and impulse purchasing (Miao, 2011; Hanks & Mattila, 2014), guilt-decreasing marketing appeals (Prayag & Soscia, 2015) as well as the shame and stigma of dark tourism (Philpott, 2017; Hartmann, 2014) and sex tourism (e.g. Neal, 2018). While not necessarily obvious, what unites these research orientations is their connection to responsible and moral action. In turn, what they lack is the overall understanding of all the potential, whether environmental, social, cultural or political triggers of guilt and shame and how these triggers construct experiences and are being constructed in a tourism context. Shame and guilt are complex emotions often discussed with reluctance and through the theory of phenomenology, what this research is hoping to achieve, is the understanding of the ways in which these self-conscious emotions shape the experience of travel-related consumption practises.

It could be argued that in previous research, guilt and shame are generally considered as mediums that reveal the scale and nature of responsibility. In exploring the instrumental role of both guilt and shame in individual experiences in relation to tourism-related consumption practises, this study aims at illustrating the impact of these negative emotions on both consumer experience and behaviour. Drawing on the notion of the mediating force and nature of shame and guilt, this study can be considered as a

constructivist exploration into both the antecedents and consequences of travel-related guilt and shame.

1.1 Previous research

The undeniable focus of previous research on the feelings of shame and guilt in the tourism industry in recent years has been on the ecological aspects related to travel and tourism. With increased concerns about the many implications of the climate crisis, the trend is not a stranger in tourism research either. One of the major focuses has been on the phenomenon of flygskam, flight shame, which first forcefully emerged in 2018, in Sweden. Originally emphasized by the Swedish environmental activist Greta Thunberg, as a movement and prevalent collective feeling, flight shame can be regarded as a result of debates over personal responsibility and accountability and the role of air travel in climate change (Gössling, Humpe & Bausch, 2020). Gössling et al. (2020) describe flight shame as a feeling of unease about the climate implications of air travel. Gössling et al. (2020) also point out that the phenomenon of flight shame bears evidence of a change in social norms that have so far associated flying with social status. However, several publications have concluded that only limited evidence on actual behavioural change in the context of climate change and air travel has emerged (Gössling et al., 2020).

Continuing with the themes of climate change and ecological impacts of tourism, Mkono and Hughes (2020) studied the growing sense of 'eco-guilt' and 'eco-shame' among consumers exhibited in online travel forums. Much like feelings of guilt and shame in general, eco-guilt and eco-shame are not often explicitly addressed in tourism studies (Mkono & Hughes, 2020). The scholars define eco-guilt/shame as guilt or shame that people feel when they are aware of environmentally harmful behaviour (Mkono & Hughes, 2020). With the focus of identifying both the triggers and responses of eco-guilt and eco-shame specifically, the study found that tourists are largely aware of the potential negative impacts of travel and that the use of eco-guilt as means to prompt green travel choices shows promise (Mkono & Hughes, 2020). However, the study also identified that while inducing guilt sparked a response among some consumers, others developed complex strategies to reduce this guilt (Mkono & Hughes, 2020).

A quantitative study on when and why do people experience flight shame by Doran, Pallesen, Böhm and Ogunbode (2021) revealed that a substantial proportion of the

research survey respondents reported feeling “not at all” shame or embarrassment in consideration of their flying. In addition to exploring the prevalence of flight shame in different travel situations that may involve flying, the study delved into injunctive and descriptive norms - how flight shame may be modified by expectations related to the social acceptance of others and observing how others usually behave. The results indicate that flight shame tended to be lower for family and friends visits in comparison to work trips. The situation of going on holiday in turn compared at significantly higher at the extent of shame and embarrassment. The study found shame to be positively associated with perceptions of how important other people regarded whether shame and embarrassment were appropriate emotional reactions towards air travel. Similar positive association could not be found with perceptions of normative behaviour among important social referents. Thus, the findings could suggest that social expectations had a role in dictating the extent to which the respondents expressed feelings of shame or embarrassment regarding their flying. (Doran et al., 2021.)

With less focus on the environmental aspects of shame and guilt, the research on more generalizable consumer guilt has received considerable attention especially in the field of marketing communications and consumer behaviour (Dedeoğlu & Kazançoğlu, 2010). Examples of studies on consumer guilt consist of research on antecedents and/or consequences of consumer guilt (Bei et al., 2007; Lin & Xia, 2009, as cited in Dedeoğlu & Kazançoğlu, 2010, p. 463) and consumers’ coping mechanisms with it (see Dahl, Honea & Machanda, 2005; Yi & Baumgartner, 2004). The concept of consumer guilt in the hospitality and tourism context has provided insight on the role of guilt as a key emotion in the consumer purchase context (Jang & Mattila 2005; Mattila & Choi 2006; Kang et al. 2012, as cited in Hanks & Mattila, 2014, p. 625).

Combining the aspects of consumer behaviour, guilt, cultural variation and tourism context, Socia, Prayag and Hesapci (2019) assessed how guilt-decreasing appeals were able reduce anticipated guilt toward a luxury vacation without compromising levels of happiness across two cultures with different values. The study findings were able to demonstrate the efficacy of guilt decreasing appeals in reducing the amount of anticipated guilt a consumer feels, irrespective of their cultural values, when considering the purchase of a luxury vacation. The scholars also noted that the credibility of the advertisers plays a big role in reinforcing emotional appeals and by reducing guilt, the happiness level associated with a guilty pleasure is not compromised. (Socia et al. 2019.)

As guilt in particular is often associated with moral wrong-doing (DeRivera, 1984; Lindsay-Hartz, 1984, as cited in Bedford & Whang, 2003), the association to negative impacts of one's actions can be considered rather evident. However, it is relevant to point out that Dedeoğlu and Kazançoğlu (2010) have indicated that consumer guilt is only short-lived and superficial and is more often associated with good and bad actions rather than right versus wrong actions. Despite of this consideration, the tourism activity creates impacts and consequences and while the economic aspects are often highlighted in the discussion in a positive light, it has become apparent that in some cases the economic benefits of tourism can be offset by conflicting environmental and social consequences (Archer, Cooper & Ruhanen, 2005, p. 79).

In their critique on (eco)guilt research in tourism, Bahja, Alvarez and Fyall (2022) note that based on the literature review of 19 publications, (eco)guilt research in tourism is conducted in diverse contexts and is dominated by quantitative approaches examining (eco)guilt at an individual scale. Bahja et al. (2022) suggest that while current research is able to demonstrate that (eco)guilt is a trigger for decision-making and behaviours, future research should strive to identify the linkages of different types of guilt, and related influence. The scholars note that in the context of tourism experience, the three types of guilt - anticipatory, proceeding, and reactive - more widely recognized in consumer research literature, should correspond respectively with the tourists' three-stage consumption path. Hence, in researching a specific type of guilt, the examined stage should correspond with that distinct type of guilt. This discrepancy in stage of consumption activities and the data collection can be observed in current tourism research. (Bahja et al., 2022)

The lack of extensive research on the thematically varied motifs of shame and guilt in tourism contexts would suggest that while the trends of responsibility and sustainability have expanded their presence in the industry, the expected experience of tourism encounter is nevertheless up to the present time regarded as a pristine pleasure with only little room for negative emotions. In most affluent societies in particular, the freedom of travel is highly valued (Cohen & Higham, 2011) and negative attitudes, assumptions and emotions admittedly disrupt that freedom. Additionally, the current body of literature has a heavy focus on either using quantitative methods or undertaking a purely descriptive phenomenological approach when studying the experiences related to shame and guilt.

For its part, this dissertation seeks to fill the gap observed in the current body research literature by extending on the existing observations on the emotions of shame and guilt in the tourism context in particular.

1.2 Purpose of the study

The present study represents an attempt to extend on the relatively sparse research with the sole focus on the concepts of shame and guilt in tourism contexts. In an attempt to broaden the discussion beyond the environmental and ecological aspects predominantly associated with shame and guilt in tourism research, this study serves as a representation of the multidimensional perspectives of emotions and issues of consumerism that arise in the confessionals of female travellers. The study takes part in the academic discussion on responsible and sustainable tourism practices by illustrating the underlying travel-related triggers of guilt and shame that have the potential to disrupt consumers' consumption practices.

The scope of the study is to identify how guilt and shame shape the experience of travel consumption for female travellers in tourism settings. For the purposes of this study, this mentioned tourism setting includes not only the physical and conceptual environment or setting in which tourism activities take place, but also any conceptual and/or physical environments related to travel preparation or post-travel arrangements. The objective of the study is achieved by both identifying and analysing triggers, outcomes and subjective reflections of shame and guilt that arise through semi-structured interviews. The term confessionals is used as a synonym for the interviews conducted in this study.

The gender perspective has been chosen for this research as a defining aspect as previous research supports the notion that women are more prone to experience feelings of guilt (Hanks & Mattila 2014; see also Dittmar, Beattie & Friese, 1996; Rook & Hoch, 1985). Gender is also an easily discernible feature that marketers often use to target marketing and advertising. By focusing on a demographic, the purpose of the study is not to exclude, but rather to provide undivided focus. Guilt, in turn, has been identified as a key emotion in the consumer purchase context (Carter & Gilovich 2010; Brewer & Weber 1994; Soscia, 2007, as cited in Hanks & Mattila, 2014). Thus, this study also seeks to examine the ways in which this notion of gendered guilt is in line with tourism related instances.

The study also aims to identify any potential resistance to shame and guilt and to dissect how do both the triggers and constructs of shame and guilt disrupt the order of consumption. In doing so, the findings have the potential to extend the scope of both current and future research to the implications of consumer behaviour. The focus of the research is on the antecedents and consequences of shame and guilt and the ways in which experienced shame and guilt are being exhibited and constructed in interview confessionals. The research questions prompted the four key themes of the research through which the experiential nature of shame and guilt in tourism contexts was mainly observed. These key themes were (1) triggers, (2) construction of guilt and shame, (3) resistance and (4) disruption.

The research seeks to answer the following research questions:
RQ1: What are the triggers of travel-related shame and guilt for female travellers?
RQ2: How is shame and guilt being constructed in the confessionals?
RQ3: How are shame and guilt being resisted in the confessionals?
RQ4: How do both the triggers and constructs of shame and guilt disrupt the order of consumption?

This study is of relevance in the field of tourism as previous research seems to lack a wider representation of specifically gendered guilt and shame to provide insight on the varied precursors of those emotions in tourism experience contexts. The findings of the research are particularly relevant from the perspective of tourism-related consumer research in providing insight for marketers to be able to both recognize and eliminate guilt and shame inducing aspects in their commercial endeavours. In addition to any relevance for commercial use, the research is hoped to be of importance from a societal perspective as well. The research seeks to shed light on some of the most uncomfortable instances in today's travel behaviour and contribute to the increased academic debate on hushed issues and negative emotions and experiences related to tourism. Additionally, this study provides for a cultural view on the aspects of guilt and shame. It should be duly noted, that even though regarded as universal feelings, culture plays a major role in both the amount of guilt and shame that is felt, but also in the way in which those feelings are expressed.

1.3 Data and methodology

The objective of this research is the study of human experience. For the purpose of this research, the research strategy of qualitative research was chosen as the most appropriate. The strength of qualitative research is that it allows for an inductive approach, granting for a ceaseless pursuit of meaning (Galletta & Cross, 2013). In an effort to explore and obtain information about the lived reality, experiences, the phenomenological research approach of hermeneutic phenomenology was chosen as the theoretical framework for the research. The perspective that this study undertakes is that of the constructivist/interpretivist paradigm which functions as a guideline for the choice of methodology as well. The approaches of constructivism and phenomenology were chosen for this study to allow for the research participants to construct and share their own individual interpretations of the reality. In turn, the chosen the hermeneutic approach of interpretative hermeneutic phenomenology allows the researcher to interfere with the analysis with their own assumptions and interpretations of the data. The perspective of including researcher interpretation is considered highly relevant for this study due to the sensitivity of the research topic. The study participants may be unable or unwilling to express the full course of their experiences in speech as such (Tökkäri, 2018, p. 68) and thus it is relevant for the researcher to attempt to dig deeper into the experience through the nuances provided during the interviews.

Furthermore, in an attempt to best dissect and identify the different constructs prevalent in the experience of travel related shame and guilt, the method of semi-structured interviews was chosen to produce the most in-depth and rich data for analysis. While the choice of interviews as a research method cannot be considered a pioneering method in gaining insight on human experiences, the method has proven to be flexible and versatile in allowing for the flow of information and the reciprocity between a researcher and an interviewee. The data consists of semi-structured interviews of eight Finnish women and the interviews were held during late autumn 2021. All interviews were recorded and later transcribed in written format. The data in written format was then analysed using interpretative phenomenological analysis, IPA.

Generally speaking, in qualitative analysis, the material is often viewed as a whole. Even if the obtained research material consists of separate research units, such as individuals in individual interviews, the research argument cannot be built on the differences between

individuals with respect to different "variables". (Alasuutari, 2011.) Alasuutari (2011) argues that qualitative analysis consists of two steps: the reduction of observations and the solution of a dilemma. The idea of reducing observations can be divided into two parts. In the first part, qualitative data is always observed only from a certain theoretical-methodological perspective and attention is paid only to what is essential for the theoretical frame of reference and research questions. As a result, the mass of data is reduced to a more manageable number of discrete observations. The idea of the second part is to further reduce the number of observations by now combining the observations. Separate observations are combined into a set of observations. This is achieved by finding a common feature and denominator of the findings or by formulating a rule that applies without exception to the whole material. Differences between people or units of observation are important in qualitative analysis, as they often provide clues as to what is causing something or what makes it comprehensible. However, focusing too much on individual differences will only result in the phenomenon under study slipping further away from the focus of the research. The second step of qualitative research, the solution of a dilemma, is essentially the act of interpretation. (Alasuutari, 2011.)

The social contribution of qualitative research is based on the way it explains the world from a number of different perspectives. Where in quantitative research the objective reality exists regardless of human perception, qualitative research sees reality as dependent on human mental structure and function. Thus, qualitative research is not objective in the ontological sense, but provides an insight into a number of different realities based on a personal interpretation of the construction of reality. (Slevtich, 2011.) Because social reality is dependent on the mind, it cannot be free of value or from personal views, interests, and purposes (Putnam, 1981, as cited in Slevitch, 2011). With regard to social phenomena, this interpretation of ambiguity or multi-reality is valuable because it contributes to explaining why so many social phenomena are controversial. However, this same ambiguity and the “placement” of objectivity undoubtedly raises concerns and questions about the ethical aspects of research conduct.

1.4 Structure of the study

This study consists of five chapters. The first chapter provides for an introduction to the topic of this dissertation by presenting related previous research and illustrating the purpose and the objective of the study in relation to existing literature. The chapter also

provides for a short overview of the data, methods and methodology employed in this research. The second chapter focuses on the concepts of shame and guilt from the perspectives of functionality, socialization and culture, consumer behaviour and specific implications of the dissertation.

The third chapter revolves around the empirical implementation of the research. The chapter aims at clarifying the ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions behind the research preference. The chapter also provides an illustration on what type of environment the research will be carried out in, what methods will be used, how the results obtained will be analysed and which ethical issues are of particular importance for the research. Following on the more practical considerations of the research, the fourth chapter both presents the findings and provides for a content analysis on the findings. The chapter presents the interpretative phenomenological analysis of the empirical research data through the interview transcripts.

The discussion chapter, the fifth chapter, summarizes both the findings and the related analysis. In the fifth chapter, the original research questions are also answered. The final and the sixth chapter then discusses the limitations and implications of the study and features a reflection on the direction of potential future research. The chapter also briefly discusses personal learning outcomes and aims at providing critique to the research at hand.

2 THE MANY FACES OF SHAME AND GUILT

This chapter is a cross-section of some of the different approaches of shame and guilt in current academic research. The coverage of previous research and different means of theorizing on shame and guilt are here used to build ground for the theoretical framework of the study. While the focus of the study is not on the research of emotions, but rather on the experiences integrated with those emotions, shame and guilt are nevertheless prevalent study-relevant conceptual constructs. However, the study of emotions itself is only indirectly referred to and the focus is on the concepts of shame and guilt in helping to build on the theoretical framework for this study. In this study, shame and guilt are primarily considered in relation to tourism, but a more general understanding of the nature of shame and guilt both at the individual level and as a socially constructed phenomenon allows for more comprehensive interpretations upon the analysis phase. Shame and guilt

are challenging subjects of research, so any premonition that a researcher can achieve is considered useful. Although shame and guilt are widely recognized affects, their role still remains taboo in many societies. Especially in the context of tourism, shame and guilt are often portrayed in relation to consumption and related implications. This chapter explores shame and guilt from four different perspectives: shame and guilt as self-conscious and functional motivators, as socially and culturally constructed phenomenon, as part of consumer behaviour and lastly, as the theoretical implications in this particular research.

2.1 Shame and guilt as self-conscious functional motivators

Guilt and shame are considered predominantly bad or uncomfortable feelings that are nonetheless often experienced, perhaps even daily. As an essential part of human behaviour and the world of the mind, the concepts of shame and guilt have their strongest foundations in psychology, anthropology and sociology. While shame and guilt are often coupled and changed correspondingly, research indicates that they are distinct affective experiences (Malinen, 2010, p. 15). Early scholars of psychology such as Freud and Piers have especially sought to define the difference between shame and guilt (Malinen, 2010, p. 13). A distinction must be made between the feelings of shame and guilt, as each feeling is linked to a slightly different state of emotion or "being".

While Freud considered shame a feeling that is reflected from the outside and guilt as an act of self-reproach based on internalization values, according to Piers, guilt is related to transgressions, and shame to unattainable goals and failure to meet expectations (Malinen, 2010, p. 14). A simplified account of this consideration is that guilt is felt in relation to one's deeds, while shame is felt on who one intrinsically is (Bedford & Hwang, 2003; Tracy & Robins, 2007a; Sabini & Silver, 1997, as cited in Mkono & Hughes 2020). In turn, a study by Tangney, Miller, Flicker and Barlow (1996, p. 1264) illustrated that shame and guilt most often occurred in social contexts and that shame was reported as the more intense and aversive experience by study participants. According to Babcock and Sabini (1990, as cited in Bedford & Hwang, 2003), early conceptions of shame by psychoanalysts and anthropologists characterized shame as an immature emotion in contrast to the more mature emotion, guilt. Bedford and Whang (2003) conclude that guilt was assumed to be a sense of self-control in adults while shame was understood to be a childish regression.

Much of the current research on shame and guilt considers shame and guilt as self-conscious emotions. In addition to shame and guilt, the family of self-conscious emotions include embarrassment and pride. Tracy and Robins (2007a, p. 5-7) list five major attributes of self-conscious emotions that distinguish them from non-self-conscious, basic emotions: "(1) self-conscious emotions require self-awareness and self-representations, (2) self-conscious emotions emerge later in childhood than basic emotions, (3) self-conscious emotions facilitate the attainment of complex social goals, (4) self-conscious emotions do not have discrete, universally recognized facial expressions, (5) self-conscious emotions are cognitively complex". Leary (2007, p. 330) contests that the self-regulation of interpersonal behaviour involves self-conscious emotions as those emotions present an integral part in guiding behaviour towards adhering to norms and morals, recognizing and responding to misbehaviours and promoting appropriate remediative responses. To conclude, it would appear that self-conscious emotions are a result of the ability to evaluate the self and maintain social goals.

Self-conscious emotions emerge when any reflected behaviour is compared to social norms and standards. This comparison prompts both the ethics of the behaviour and what the behaviour reveals about the self. (de Hooge, Zeelenberg & Breugelmans, 2011, p. 198.) As the set of standards towards which behaviour is compared to, the cultural variation in self-conscious emotions is also evident (Lewis, 2000; Kitayama, Rose Markus, & Matsumoto, 1995; as cited in de Hooge et al. 2011, p. 198). Tracy and Robins (2007a) refer to several different studies that have linked shame and guilt to a wide array of empirical outcomes. The scholars recount guilt as being a central part of reparative and prosocial behaviours such as empathy, altruism, as well as caregiving. Shame, in turn, is found to mediate the negative emotional and physical health consequences of social stigma. (Tracy & Robins, 2007a, p. 4.)

The experiences of shame often relate to being flawed, exposed, worthless, powerless or judged. Hence, those experiences tend to focus on the image of oneself. Guilt, on the other hand, does not involve a complete change in the image of oneself - we did a bad thing, but we are not a bad person. The phenomenological experience of guilt includes the sense of regret and responsibility. (Lindsay-Hartz, 1984.) Leary (2007, p. 331) remarks that the feeling of guilt is considered less painful as the person's negative self-judgment applies to a specific behaviour rather than to their character. In addition to the pervasive discomfort the feelings of shame and guilt may provide, Bedford and Hwang (2003) argue

that guilt and shame actually help maintain a sense of personal identity, function as instruments of social control, provide a medium to process stress or norm violation into self-punishment and shape the overall human behaviour. Lindsay-Hartz (1984), in turn, adds that the experiences of shame and guilt function as reins in guiding a person towards acknowledging personal goals and values. Experiences of guilt in particular aid in supporting the idea of moral standards and that we can maintain control of events by reconciling with others and being forgiven (Lindsay-Hartz. 1984).

Barrett (1995, p. 26, 41, 44) knowledges the important behaviour-regulatory, intrapersonal (internal regulatory) and interpersonal (social regulatory), functions of shame and guilt, and distinguishes particular action tendencies between the two affects. As shame is felt in relation to who one intrinsically is and sense of morale, the only perceived option of action tendency is that of withdrawal or disappearance from the judgement or evaluation of others. The desire of withdrawal can result in people staying quiet about their experiences of shame or even taking drastic actions in order to hide (Lindsay-Hartz, 1984; Gruenewald, Dickerson & Kemeny, 2007, p. 72-73). Guilt, in turn, is affiliated with an outward movement, aimed at atonement of experienced wrongdoing. Guilt grants a person an agency that can also serve as means of both remedy and learning about oneself. In her study on the structures of experiences of shame and guilt, Lindsay-Hartz (1984) also found that interviewees were more willing to reflect on their experiences of guilt, almost in a manner of confessing. The feeling of guilt pushes us to set things right and make up for one's actions (Lindsay-Hartz, 1984). However, Barrett (1995, p. 45) points out the importance of context in relation to these action tendencies. If a particular shame-related movement is observed in a context that does not authorize shame-relevant functions, the movement cannot be directly regarded as an indication of shame.

de Hooge et al. (2011, p. 200) reflect that one potential means of studying the influence of emotions on behaviour is anticipation through assumed valence, whether the emotions are positive or negative. However, the determination of behaviour is not as clear cut with self-conscious emotions that shame and guilt can also be regarded as. According to de Hooge et al. (2011, p. 200) different self-conscious emotions of the same valence have the potential to motivate quite different behaviours. While the experiences of shame have mainly been illustrated in resulting in the action of withdrawal, Tangney et al. (1996) have found that also shame activates the willingness to make amends. Similarly, de Hooge

et al. (2011, p. 202) suggest that shame motivates approach behaviours to restore the self. These behaviours attempt at maintaining a positive self-view and can motivate people to enter achievement situations, perform new challenges and undertake reparative actions. Additionally, de Hooge et al. (2011, p. 203) suggest that the approach behaviour resulting from shame depends on the situation and on whether the emotion is endogenous (coming from within) or exogenous (coming from outside). The scholars argue that endogenous shame motivates prosocial behaviour. While shame can elicit both inward (withdrawal) and outward (willingness for atonement) behaviour, the positive behavioural aspect is more evident with guilt. Empirical support is found on the positive, adaptive influences of guilt in eg. motivating a heightened sense of personal responsibility, compliance, and forgiveness, and generating more constructive strategies to cope with anger. Guilt can be considered a moral emotion that promotes prosocial behaviour. (de Hooge et al. 2011, p. 204.)

The concept of functional shame and guilt also explains the social nature of these emotions. As guilt is experienced in relation to action, or moral wrong-doing, the event is most times in relation to other morally knowledgeable people. As a result, the individual experiencing guilt typically focuses on the harm or injury they have caused to others and attempts to remedy that harm (Malinen, 2010). The empirical and theoretical consensus is that the subjective experience of guilt involves feelings of violation of the moral order and responsibility for negative outcomes (DeRivera, 1984; Lindsay-Hartz, 1984). Shame, on the other hand, is a feeling of losing status in the eyes of oneself or other significant individuals (Bedford & Whang, 2003). Both emotions are strongly connected to the social standing of the individual. According to Lehtinen (1995, p. 8-9; 1998, p. 42) shame is also intertwined with authority and power as the shame of the minority is socially shaped and reinforced, institutionalized and systematized: stigma and shame systematically produce feelings of inadequacy for the lower in the social hierarchy. Leary (2007, p. 329) notes the social aspect of the two self-conscious emotions in observing that several sources confirm that instead of comparing one's behaviour to personal self-representations or standards, people rather tend to draw inferences about other people's evaluations.

2.2 Socially and culturally constructed shame and guilt

The perspective on shame remains incomplete if shame is observed only as an individual tendency or sensitivity. In conceptualizing shame as an intrinsic characteristic and a behaviour guiding feature of action obscures the diversity of shame and its related contexts. (Leeming & Boyle, 2004, p. 375.) Quite the opposite from the idea that shame and guilt are nothing more than an intrapersonal response, guilt and shame in particular, can be considered as an indication of acknowledging meaningful social rules and expectations (Mesquita & Karasawa, 2004, p. 163). According to Barrett (1995, p. 25) shame and guilt are social emotions that are "(1) socially constructed, (2) invariably connected with (real or imagined) social interaction, (3) endowed with significance by social communication and/or relevance to desired ends --, and (4) associated with appreciations (appraisals) regarding others, as well as the self." Barrett (1984), similarly, notes that experiences of shame and guilt transform our relationship to others: shame transforms our identity through the experience of being worthless and exposed, guilt pushes our identities under scrutiny and creates tension between ourselves and others but isn't as transformative a force in relation to the sense of identity. In short, shame and guilt are constructed through socialization.

Socialization serves as an important source of information about rules, standards and self. Through socialization, the individual learns the significance of those standards and compliance with standards becomes an important objective for the individual. (Barrett, 1995, p. 50.) Leeming and Boyle (2004, p. 385-387) point out that the real or imagined presence of others appears to be a significant factor in accounts of feeling ashamed. To feel ashamed can be considered as a reflection of an individual's status relative to those around them. In addition to the status of the self, people can also experience guilt and shame as a result from the actions of others associated with them (Branscombe & Doojse 2004, Lickel et al. 2005, as cited in Leary, 2007, p. 331). Social comparison and the anticipation of others' evaluation and response to negative information about the self also plays a significant role in acts of revelation, especially in case of fear of rejection (Gilbert, 1998, p. 20). This notion is further tied to the aforementioned action tendencies of guilt and shame in particular.

Gruenewald et al. (2007) seek to explain the social connections of shame through the social self-preservation theory. The theory postulates that even though the experience of

shame can be considered private and individual, shame is a social reaction that signals threat to the social self. Gruenewald et al. (2007, p. 69) further remark that "threat to the social self occurs when there is an actual or likely loss of social esteem, status, or acceptance". The relevance of a positive image of social self is important to the individual due to its central role in maintaining social relationships essential for survival and reproduction (Gruenewald et al., 2007, p. 69). The existence of shame and guilt as socially relevant experiences is also confirmed in a study by Tangney et al. (1996) in which it was found that guilt serves a length of relationship-enhancing functions and shame is a more primitive emotion that serves more adaptive functions.

Gilbert (2003) further divides shame into *external* and *internal*. The scholar considers that external shame relates to social attractiveness and observing how we exist in relation to others and their judgments of us (Gilbert, 2003). The yearning of social attractiveness acts as a motivation for an individual to manipulate their self-presentations to secure good outcomes, enabling them to achieve a range of social roles. Shame is considered a warning signal for the individual that their self-presentation is not activating enough positive (or only negative) affect in the mind of others. This self-other dynamic in the experience of shame implies a constant flow between self-evaluations and evaluations of self by others in the experience of self. (Gilbert, 2003.) Negative self-evaluation is related to the subjective sense of self and normally referred to as internal or internalized shame (Gilbert, 1998, p. 17). While internal and external shame can be considered to be highly correlated, they need not always be so. Individual can be ashamed for appearing to lack feelings of shame without a sense of internal shame. If behaviour is controlled entirely by external shame, the idea of being able to avoid revelation may lead to engagement in socially shamed behaviour. (Gilbert, 1998, p. 21.)

In order to fully understand the social aspects of shame, consideration for the cultural impact is imperative. Although shame is experienced in all cultures (Malinen, 2010, p. 44), each culture contains rules about the propriety of the displays or experiences of specific emotions. The surrounding culture influences what kind of cultural positions are available to the individual. Culture determines what is considered shameful or honourable. (Leeming & Boyle, 2004, p. 384.) The history and cultural traditions of a country also contribute to the emergence and manifestation of shame (Malinen, 2010, p. 44). Mesquita and Karasawa (2004, p. 165) note that globally, children from different

cultures have similar universal and primitive responses to both accepted or rejected behaviour. Socialization shapes those responses to match with each lived context.

Numerous studies state that the experience and types of guilt and shame may vary across cultures (Bedford, 2004; Wong & Tsai, 2007; Wallbot & Scherer, 1995; Grey et al., 2018, as cited in Mkono & Hughes 2020). Goetz and Keltner (2007) concede that both evolution and culture influence self-conscious emotions and that people in different cultures clearly have different conceptions of events that evoke self-conscious emotions. According to Fessler's (2007) research, in both communal and individual cultures, the feeling of shame was most often associated with violations in relationships, failures in performance or failures to adapt to community standards. He noted that in particular, in communal cultures, shame still functions in maintaining hierarchies and motivates adaptation to community rules. Other research also strongly suggests differences in the moral systems of Eastern and Western cultures (Bedford, 1994; Hwang, 2001a, as cited in Bedford & Hwang, 2003). In Western cultures, which also includes the target group of this study, the independent self is quite autonomous, and both successes and failures are attributed to one's individual ability. Additionally, individuals are socialized to depend on themselves and acts are seen as the result of personal goals and intentions. (Mesquita & Karasawa, 2004, p. 161). Leeming and Boyle (2004, p. 389) note that in Western societies in particular, the construction of negative identity can be based on eg. competency, productivity, deviance or immorality.

Wong and Tsai (2007), in turn, have suggested that these differences in the experiences of shame and guilt are a result of how the sense of self is constructed in different cultures. The manifestations of shame are different in cultures that also differ in positioning the individual within the culture. With reference to several studies, Wong and Tsai (2007, p. 214) conclude that because people in more communal cultures do not view themselves as separate from their relationships with others, shame and guilt are considered less differentiated than in individualistic cultures. Wierzbicka (1986, p. 591) has also noted that in some non-Western cultures the concept related to shame plays an important social role in regulating conduct in a community. Even if the emotional experiences are pretty much similarly constructed in different cultures, actual cultural differences may occur in terms of how often certain emotions are experienced, in what type of situations those emotions occur, how emotions are expressed and how behavioural impulses are regulated (Silfver-Kuhalampi & Helkama, 2012, p. 383). Antonetti and Baines (2015, p. 16)

additionally hypothesize that guilt appeals based on regulation failures related to the self (as opposed to societal standards or to relationships with others) are processed similarly across different cultural backgrounds. Edelstein and Shaver (2007, p. 205) also point out that shame in particular has been found to play a larger role in some cultures and languages than either guilt or embarrassment.

As culture and language are closely intertwined, it is no surprise that also the vocabulary related to guilt and shame is very different in different languages (Silfver-Kuhalampi & Helkama, 2012, p. 383; Goetz & Keltner, 2007, p. 163). Wierzbicka (1986, p. 593) illustrates that "if a language does not discriminate lexically between say, shame and fear, then an investigator may be unable to make its speakers perceive fear and shame as two different feelings --". Edelstein and Shaver (2007) similarly contribute to this idea of guilt having no universal features through their lexical study of the self-conscious emotions of shame, guilt, embarrassment, and pride. The scholars found that in the few lexical studies of English emotion terms, guilt, shame, and embarrassment all cluster closely together suggesting no clear distinctions drawn among these emotions (Edelstein & Shaver, 2007, p. 205).

2.3 Consumer guilt and ethical consumerism

As the aim of this study is to determine how guilt and shame shape an individual's travel-related consumption practices and what interpretations those individuals give for the namely emotions, an attempt must also be made in understanding some of the strictly consumption related conceptions of shame and guilt. The academic consensus would appear to be on the sole use of the term guilt (and not shame) in relation to consumer behaviour, because as elaborated in prior paragraphs, guilt could generally be described as a self-conscious emotion resulting from immoral action. Hence, this subchapter will also resolve to using that terminology. More specifically, the focus of this subchapter will be on the antecedents and coping mechanisms of consumer guilt as well as on the concept of consumer guilt primarily from the perspective of moral and ethical consumerism.

Consumer guilt is an emotion which results from one's realization of failing to achieve internalized personal or social moral standards, or violating these standards in the context of consumption (Bonsu & Main 2006; Boujbel 2008; Watson and Spence 2007; Dedeoğlu & Kazançoğlu; 2012). The concept of consumer guilt can be considered the ultimate

paradox of contemporary consumer culture: marketing communication has the power to both position items as objects of desire and to guilt-trip consumers with the ideology of self-control and utilitarian consumption (Dedeoğlu & Kazançoğlu, 2010, p. 462). Marketers use implied and explicit guilt feelings to persuade consumers and as a result, guilt becomes a relevant part in the consumer decision-making process (Burnett & Lunsford, 1994). For the purpose of illustrating the relevant implications of consumer guilt in this research, research conducted by Burnett and Lunsford (1994) provides for a utilitarian division of dimensions and categorization of consumer guilt. The study explored the feelings of guilt experienced by consumers in situations where the consumer is acting contrary to their own values or community standards. The research applied guilt-inducing advertisements as research material and the participants were asked to place the adverts into one of the four predefined categories of guilty consumption. The study identified four dimensions of consumer guilt: (1) financial guilt, (2) health guilt, (3) moral guilt and (4) social responsibility guilt. Furthermore, consumer guilt could be generally classified across the four dimensions of the construct by three categories: (1) state of the guilt, (2) purchase decision and (3) focus of the guilt.

In Burnett and Lunsford's (1994) study, financial guilt is characterized by feelings of guilt that result from making purchases that are not easily justified. In the tourism context, the experience of financial guilt is also addressed by Hanks and Mattila (2013), using an impulsive travel purchase as the context. The study concluded that guilt was experienced over a variety of purchase types, in different circumstances, and for numerous reasons. The second dimension of consumer guilt, health guilt was experienced in relation to physical welfare. Health guilt was experienced in relation to purchasing decisions that are not beneficial to one's health. (Burnett & Lunsford, 1994.)

The third dimension of consumer guilt is the result of the consumer's moral beliefs: what is considered immoral or clashing with moral standards is likely to bring about feelings of guilt. The last dimension identified is labelled as social responsibility guilt. Social responsibility guilt occurs when one violates one's perceived social obligations as a result of a purchase decision. (Burnett & Lunsford, 1994.) Several scholars (see eg. Dedeoğlu & Kazançoğlu, 2010; Miao, 2011; Tracy, Robins, & Tangney, 2007) agree to the idea that committing transgression and violating normative and moral standards will result in increased feelings of guilt. In line with normative standards, Dedeoğlu and Kazançoğlu (2012, p. 11) also suggest that consumption related self-control failures and hedonic

consumption of indulgences can result in heightened feelings of guilt. Dahl et al. (2003, p. 164) further confirm the idea of guilt resulting from the perceived failure to adhere to the standards that regulate behaviour within the society. In the light of current tourism research, it could be argued that the dimensions moral guilt and social responsibility guilt are the most prevalent with the introduction of phenomena like eco-guilt, flight shame and travel restrictions posed by the pandemic alike.

As for the state of the guilt, consumer guilt can be categorized as anticipatory, reactive and proceeding guilt. Anticipatory guilt is experienced in relation to the contemplation of transgression, reactive guilt occurs after one has committed a transgression and proceeding guilt arises during the consumption behaviour. (Dedeoğlu & Kazançoğlu, 2012, p. 10.) Dedeoğlu and Kazançoğlu (2010) found that the emotional reaction most frequently arising from each of these states in that of regret. Burnett and Lunsford (1994) note that recognizing the distinction between the different states of regret is particularly important to marketers in designing and targeting marketing activities.

Leaning on the assumption that feelings of guilt are sought to be avoided, a body of coping strategies has been recognized in consumers attempting to regulate their emotions. From the perspective of this dissertation, understanding the different strategies of coping with guilt is essential in the attempt to elicit information on how shame and guilt are being resisted in the interview confessionals. In the literature of self-conscious emotions, coping responses have been studied as adaptive and maladaptive coping. Adaptive coping refers to strategies dealing with negative emotions cognitively through rational problem solving (Dedeoğlu & Kazançoğlu, p. 11-12). In using problem-focused coping, the consumer attempts to manage the trigger of a negative emotional experience and act on the alleged threat in order to change the nature of a stressor (see eg. Duhachek, 2005; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). An example of this type of strategy could be licensing. The licensing effect occurs when a person performs a good deed prior to the consumption decision in order to settle or mitigate any potential feelings of guilt (see eg. Khan & Dhar, 2006; Merritt, Effron & Monin, 2010). Rationing, in turn, is a strategy used to control or limit the scale of consumption (Wertenbroch, 1998). Contrarily, maladaptive coping strategies can be defined as emotion-focused in attempting to reduce the symptoms of negative emotions and to regulate the personal emotional response (Dedeoğlu & Kazançoğlu, p. 12).

Through their review of both advertising research and consumer research, Antonetti and Baines (2015, p. 10) argue that irrespective of whether guilt is triggered by a consumption episode or elicited through marketing communications, the main components of the emotional process remain unchanged. As Tracy and Robins (2007a, p. 5-7) suggest, guilt is determined by advanced cognitive processes and recognizing that certain cognitions can cause guilt is extremely meaningful from a marketing perspective (Antonetti and Baines, 2015, p. 4). The research that supports the findings on the functional aspects of emotions of shame and guilt is particularly essential from the perspective of this dissertation, as it perhaps provides a pathway to understanding the level of shame and guilt that may also result in action paralysis. Research conducted by Binney and Brennan (2010) studied the impact of social advertising which overtly appeals to consumer's sense of fear, guilt and shame. The study revealed that negative appeals were more likely to invoke self-protection and inaction rather than an active response such as volunteering to comply. Although the results of the study may not be directly comparable or applicable to the study in hand, it does raise a question on the "exploitation" of shame and guilt for advertising purposes and "distortion" of morality.

A theoretical approach that can be considered relevant from the perspective of both consumer guilt and this study is ethical consumerism. Ethical consumerism is a widely popularized concept in both public and scientific discussion due to ever growing interest in issues of equality, poverty and environmental issues to name a few. A key trend influencing travel behaviour is a growing concern over consumption morale (Cohen, Prayag & Moital, 2014). According to Newholm and Shaw (2007), ethical consumption is distinguished from other issues related to consumer research because of its clear socio-political nature, in which a growing body of people are increasingly convinced that the consumption of affluent economies requires some form of restraint. Brinkmann and Peattie (2008) draw a distinction between consumer ethics, which seeks to describe, understand, criticize or praise consumers on their moral behaviour, and consumption ethics that tackles the ethics of liberal capitalist economic systems. Ethics is concerned with the study of morality and the reasoning behind certain rules and principles that define right and wrong in a given situation. According to Brinkmann and Peattie (2008) consumer ethics is an underdeveloped specialization in business and marketing ethics, where most publications have focused on bad rather than good ethics and on consumer dishonesty rather than consumer idealism or responsibility.

The concepts of ethical consumerism share linkages with guilt in particular, which operates from the depths of morale. Gulyás (2008, p. 2), refers to ethical consumption as an act of conscious endeavour to make choices based on values or ethical principles. A similar approach is shared by Starr (2009, as cited in Pellandini-Simanyi, 2014) who identifies ethical consumers as consuming on the basis of not only personal pleasures and values but also on what is right and good, versus wrong and bad, in a moral sense. In contrast to the mentioned linkage between consumerism and morale, Pellandini-Simanyi (2014) refers to these approaches in arguing that ordinary consumption is immoral, or at best amoral. Also, this approach has been criticized on the basis that conjointly ethical consumption can contain self-interest. It would seem that the concept of ethical consumerism is an oxymoron and can be assessed through Wilk's (2001, as cited in Pellandini-Simanyi, 2014) term, 'dual nature' which points out that consumption norms are formulated in both reference to personal everyday life and in relation to complex political, economic, social and environmental processes. This study seeks to address the above dilemma from an individual consumer perspective and to identify whether the feelings of shame and guilt are justified through or on the basis of ethical consumerism. The study is particularly interested in the causality of morality in the tourism consumption system and the dual nature of ethical consumerism.

In tourism research the concept of ethical consumerism has been reasonably widely researched and often linked to the concepts of sustainability or ethical responsibility. A particularly interesting concept that is presented in the context of ethical consumption theory is the "attitude-behaviour gap", in which consumers attest to ethical standards in their consumption patterns, but few reflect these standards in their actual purchasing decisions. Despite the importance of the attitude-behaviour gap in the outlook for ethical or sustainable tourism consumption, it is rarely explored directly in tourism research, and there is little consensus in the literature on how and if the gap can be bridged (Cohen, Prayag & Moital, 2014.) From the perspective of this study, it is particularly interesting to examine the role of shame and guilt on the attitude-behaviour gap.

An essential concept in terms of consumer behaviour research is consumer misbehaviour. Fullerton and Punj (1997, 2004) define consumer misbehaviour as consumer behaviour that violates generally accepted standards of behaviour in consumption situations and thus disrupts the order of consumption. The scholars list the many variants of consumer misbehaviour such as shoplifting, vandalism, financial fraud, and physical or verbal

abuse. It has been noted by several academic researchers that consumer misbehaviour is an important yet neglected topic (McCracken, 1988; Fullerton & Punj, 1997, as cited in Fullerton & Punj, 2004). The phenomenon is grounded in several concepts from social science such as labelling, norms and expectations (Fullerton & Punj, 1997). Fullerton and Punj (2004) refer to these theoretical approaches in creating understanding around the concept.

Several studies within tourism have tended to focus on consumers/tourists as targets/victims of misbehaviour by service providers. With research focusing on tourist victimization and lighter forms of service failure, studies have also revealed the darkest outcomes of disrupted tourism services, such as tourist concern, anger, and complaint (Cohen, Prayag & Moital, 2014.) From the perspective of this study, it is not essential to identify outcomes of bad behaviour like the examples given by Fullerton and Punj (2004), but rather to seek to create a new perspective on what is considered traveller misbehaviour in relation to travel related guilt and shame. Can a violation of moral standards in a tourism context, such as leisure travel during a pandemic, be considered as misbehaviour? The desired outcome is to identify those descriptions of shame and guilt that are linked to identified misbehaviour and to uncover what kind of discourse or behaviour is permitted as normal or acceptable and what is categorized as misbehaviour.

2.4 Shame and guilt in this research

This study is based on the assumptions that 1) shame and guilt are biological, social, and cultural phenomena, 2) especially in individualistic, Western cultures guilt is felt in relation to one's deeds, while shame is felt on who one intrinsically is, 3) the terminology of shame and guilt (the semantic distinction) can often be mixed and this has an evident effect on the research literature review as well as data collection and analysis, 4) there are different dimensions of consumer guilt and varied ways of coping with said scopes of guilt, 5) shame and guilt are not entirely negative emotions but can also result in positive behaviour, and lastly 6) there is a general reluctance to share experiences about travel-related shame and guilt due to the leisurely nature of tourism.

According to Lindsay-Hartz (1984) the desire to confess can be regarded as the desire to set things right and that can be achieved by confessing and making reparations, carrying out symbolic atonement, wishing to undo the wrong, setting things right elsewhere or

seeking punishment. These activities seek to mend the feeling of guilt, but overcoming the feeling is only temporary unless the perceived wrong can actually be remedied (Lindsay-Hartz, 1984). The interviews carried out for this research are referred to as confessionals partly as an indication of the nature of the interviews. In addition to seeking to gain information on the experiences related to travel-related shame and guilt for the purpose of the research, the interviews hope to serve as a platform for "confessing". Shame and guilt are often discussed with reluctance and allowing a safe space to share those experiences is highly important.

Section 2.2 in this chapter illustrates the social and cultural perspectives on the two emotions, but considering the biological aspect of shame and guilt beyond the basic evolutionary grounds, shame and guilt are also intertwined with the concept of gender in this study. Malinen (2010) refers to several studies that have indicated differences in the feelings of guilt and shame between genders. Those studies consistently show how in comparison to men, women are both more shame-prone and more guilt-prone. Similarly, gender differences in shame and guilt across cultures again give a more complex picture (Malinen, 2010). Studies such as those of Silfver (2007) and Fischer and Manstead (2000) have indicated that gender differences in emotion tend to be large in individualistic societies in comparison to collectivistic cultures where gender differences in emotion are smaller.

From the perspective of this study, gender is an essential theoretical concept that provides a perspective not only on gendered guilt and shame, but also on the ways in which females operate in different contexts of tourism. Unrelated to the concept of shame and guilt, previous research, particularly on travel and tourism, has indicated that gender can influence the ways in which people plan, implement and experience travel (Mieczkowski, 1995; Hanks & Mattila, 2014). Several studies (see eg. Peters, 2001; Overton, 1996; Assaad & Arntz, 2005) have also stressed the role of culture in shaping women's travel patterns. Perhaps one of the most recognized frameworks on tourism and gender is the gender-aware framework by Kinnaird and Hall (1996) that argues that "tourism experiences are grounded in, and influenced by, our collective understanding of the social construction of gender" (Hall, Swain & Kinnaird, 2003). A gender-aware framework created by Kinnaird and Hall (1996) postulates that because tourism involves processes which are constructed out of complex and varied social realities, gender as being one of

the elements, gender can be used as a signifying factor in terms of the issues of relationships, differences and inequalities resulting from tourism-related processes.

A common challenge in studies related to self-conscious emotions like shame and guilt is the ambiguity and difficulty in defining the concepts. This difficulty seems to be common in several languages and as a result, the terms have the tendency to cluster easily. In this study, the difference between shame and guilt is assumed through the gaze of individualistic culture. However, during the interviews, no specific conceptual definition for the two emotions was given and participants were allowed to reflect on what shame and guilt personally mean to them.

While the objective of the research is to study and analyse experiences in relation to shame and guilt shared by the study participants, it is evident that a behavioural aspect is bound to be included. In sharing their experiences, it is likely that the confessionals include descriptions of consumption behaviour. In fact, the interview questions focusing on the aspects of resistance and disruption specifically attempt to gain knowledge on the related behavioural features. Barrett (1995, p. 45) argues that if no specific behaviour can be considered as a direct indicator of an emotion, then those emotions are challenging to study. Due to the complexity of contexts, no direct conclusions can be drawn from specific behaviour in certain contexts - many emotions arise in most contexts. This unarguably poses challenges especially from the perspective of studying shame and guilt. de Hooge et al. (2011, p. 200) reflect that there is hardly any empirical research on the behaviours elicited in attempts to regulate experiences of shame. Barrett (1995, p. 45) suggests the use of converging operations in determining how behaviours operate for an individual in a context. While it may be true that placing certain behaviour as a consequence to certain emotion is difficult or even impossible to verify, using hermeneutic phenomenology as the methodological approach, the researcher must rely on the interviewees' own interpretation of their own world of experience.

While current research is so heavily emphasized by the coverage of environmental and ecological aspects of travel-related shame and guilt, such as flygskam – flight shame, beginning from 2020, a new type of shame has been introduced in the field of tourism. The global pandemic with its prolonged travel restrictions and ongoing lockdowns has undoubtedly and majorly shifted the nature of travel and tourism as leisurely travel has been for the most part declared as immoral and even dangerous. The pandemic has

changed not only the way that people travel but also the way in which people feel about and experience travel both during and (future) post pandemic era. Pandemic-related travel guilt is the newcomer in the market and even more so than before, travel is linked to both personal and social values and is the object of peer pressure and scrutiny. While the climate crisis has made travel questionable, the pandemic has pushed it to the verge of being forbidden. It is thus no surprise that in refusing or not preferring to talk about travel-related shame and guilt one can seek to protect self-image as well as the illusion of travel as a problem-free leisure activity.

3 PHENOMENOLOGY

This chapter focuses on the methodological design of the research. The choice of phenomenology as methodology further guides the choice of methods of data collection and analysis. The chapter includes an introduction to the methodology of phenomenology and the chosen approach employed in the study, a reflection on the data collection phase of the research, the theoretical perspective and the practical implementation of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis and considerations for the research ethics and research reliability. The study operates from the perspective of the constructivist/interpretivist paradigm and employs the hermeneutic phenomenological approach to interpret experienced reality. The motivation behind choosing constructivism and the phenomenological approach was to allow for the research participants to create their own interpretations of the reality. Additionally, the hermeneutic approach of phenomenology grants the researcher the freedom to interfere with the analysis with their own assumptions and interpretations of the data.

Another significant factor in the choice of the constructivist paradigm was the discovery of the socially constructed nature of shame and guilt. The self-conscious emotions evolve in social occurrences and as a result, several perspectives are involved in maintaining separate individual realities. The questionnaire used in the interviews is a tool for dialogue, with which the researcher and the interviewee work together to build the reality based on the interviewee's experiences. In analysing the data gained from the interviews, the method of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, IPA, allows the researcher to use their presuppositions as an assistance when studying other people’s experiences. Lastly, while included as the last section of this chapter, the ethical considerations of the

research are not only a detached part of the research but a guideline to which the researcher is committed to relying on throughout the research process.

3.1 Hermeneutic phenomenological approach as methodology

The methodology chosen for this research is that of hermeneutic phenomenology. In this context, hermeneutics refers to the process of interpretation in relation to studied experiences. Historically, the concept of individual experience is relatively new. It was not until the 19th century that the concept of individual experience became widespread to emphasize the holism and variability of the experience of human world in response to the assumption that humanity could be explained universally by the means of science. (Gadamer, 1981, as cited in Tökkäri, 2018, p. 64.) Tökkäri (2018, p. 69) emphasizes that the choice of phenomenological approach and method of analysis is influenced, above all, by the researcher's definition of experience both ontologically and epistemologically. The researcher must define what the experience means in their research and what are the means in which knowledge is acquired on the experience. In the present study, reality, truth and knowledge are considered as socially constructed and therefore no single truth exists. Thus, the experiences in the reality can only be made known through interpretation. According to phenomenological philosophy, the underlying philosophical problems of research are, above all, the perception of human, i.e. what kind of person is the object of research, and the perception of information, i.e. how humane information can be obtained from such an object and what is the nature of this information (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018).

As the research at hand is concerned with the aspects of experience, the choice of hermeneutic phenomenology as the theoretical perspective to guide the interpretation and analysis of the research data was regarded as the most suitable. More specifically, the interpretative phenomenological analysis, IPA, was chosen as the most appropriate method of analysis to provide a perspective not only on the constructed content of experience but also on any underlying meanings or what is being left unsaid. As opposed to choosing the descriptive approach, it was regarded that interpretative approach would better facilitate the consideration of the many contextual features of an experience and thus increase a more thorough understanding of the phenomenon. The hermeneutic tradition emphasizes interpretability and allows the researcher's interpretations to interfere in the analysis of the material, thus expanding the field of research experience.

This section on methodology seeks to provide evidence to the basis on which the final methodological orientation and method of the study were chosen.

Phenomenology and hermeneutics are separate approaches in the understanding of reality. Central to phenomenology is the effort to study the nature of phenomena. Consecutively, hermeneutics can be defined at a general level as a doctrine of interpretation. (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010, p. 1.) Phenomenology can be considered an umbrella term that encompasses both a philosophical movement and a range of different research approaches (Kafle, 2011, p. 181). The approaches of phenomenology know the world through direct experiences of phenomena (Stewart, 1990, as cited in Botterill & Platenkamp, 2012) and phenomenology is best understood as a style of philosophising with the emphasis on discovering and describing the state of the matters as they appear and manifest into consciousness for the experiencer (Moran, 1999, p. 4). Phenomenology is also often described as the study of consciousness (Pernecky & Jamal, 2010).

Tökkäri (2018, p. 65) emphasizes that the research approaches based on Hussler (1859–1938), the original scholar of current phenomenology, tend to emphasize the individuality and consciousness of experience. Despite the different orientations or approaches of phenomenology, what they share in common is the focus on exploring the ways in which people make sense of experience and transform experience into consciousness (Patton, 1990, p. 104). With phenomenological approaches falling mainly into the constructivist paradigm, from the point of view of the experience research, both individual realities of experience and the knowledge about those realities are considered to be unique and constantly changing (Tökkäri, 2018, p. 66). Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018) also note that while the object of phenomenological research can be refined into the study of experience, as an individual's relationship to the world is understood as intentional, and because all phenomena mean something to the individual, experiences take their shape according to those meanings.

According to Moran (1999, p. 4), the primary ambition of phenomenology is for the researcher to meet the experience they encounter free of impositions or misinterpretations. More specifically, Moran's argument refers to Husslerian positivist approach and the *principle of presuppositionlessness*, according to which phenomena should be described as it is given to the researcher. (Moran, 1999, p. 9.) However, the phenomenological approach of hermeneutic phenomenology would argue on the

contrary: biases and assumptions of the researcher should not be set aside but rather to be embedded into the interpretative process (Laverty, 2003). Since even the researcher's experiences are formed in relation to the object of research, the researcher cannot possibly take the position of a completely objective observer, but is inevitably merged as part of the object they observe (Perttula, 2006, as cited in Tökkäri, 2018, p. 65).

Differing from the pioneering approach of phenomenology, originally conceptualized by Edmund Husserl (1859-1938), the approach of hermeneutic phenomenology envisaged by Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) rejects the idea of complete objectivity and suspending personal opinions (Kafle, 2011). The hermeneutic dimension of phenomenological research is joined in the research through the commitment for interpretation (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018). The main objective of hermeneutic phenomenological approach is to describe the lived experience, but unlike transcendental phenomenology, hermeneutic approach does not apply the process of reduction but instead welcomes the researcher's interpretation of the matter in analysing the data. (Tökkäri, 2018, p. 68). However, a researcher's fore-conception should not become an obstacle to interpretation but the priority should always be on the object (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009, p. 27).

Patton (2002, p. 106) agrees that the only way of really grasping what another person experiences is to experience that phenomenon as directly as possible ourselves. Hermeneutic research focuses on the world of interpersonal communication. Both linguistic and bodily expressions are the subject of hermeneutic research. Those expressions carry meanings and meanings can only be approached through understanding and interpretation. (Laine, 2001.) It should be noted that when interviewing people on their experiences, experiences cannot fully be conveyed in speech as such, as people are often unable or even reluctant to express their experiences as they occurred (Tökkäri, 2018, p. 68). In the present study, it was thus vital to be able to see the interviewees, while only through video on an online platform. According to Laine (2001, p. 30) phenomenologists share the common idea that human individuals are constructed in relation to the world they habit. Concurrently, individuals are also involved in constructing the world.

The term *intersubjectivity* is used to refer to the fundamental relatedness-to-the-world and account for our ability to make sense of each other (Smith et al., 2009, p. 17). Laine (2001, p. 30) acknowledges that the phenomenological approach also includes the idea that the

human individual is essentially communal. Meanings and the intentionality of the world are not innate in individuals, but are constructed through social interaction in different communities. Thus, people from different cultural environments experience the world differently, through communally constructed meanings (Laine, 2001, p. 31). Both this notion and the understanding of the impact of culture on self-conscious emotions further solidified the choice of methodology.

Kafle (2011) refers to the researcher as a signpost pointing towards two directions: towards both essential understanding of the research approach and essential understandings of the particular phenomenon of interest. Despite the fact that the phenomenological research tradition seeks an approach free from presuppositions, Kafle (2011) argues that in the hermeneutic attempt to study the essence, neutrality is not possible. Laine (2001, p. 34) proposes that both phenomenological and hermeneutic research have a two-tier structure: the basic level is the perceived life and reality of the subject as they express it to the researcher, and at the second level is the research itself, which examines the first level. At the first level, the subject describes their own experiences and related understanding as naturally and immediately as possible through their own means of expression. At the second level, the researcher seeks to thematize and conceptualize the meanings of the first level in their own language. Heidegger describes this same account by referring to the world as having two parts, *phenomenon* and *logos* (Smith et al. 2009, p. 23). Phenomenon can be translated as "show" or "appear" and it has dual quality for Heidegger. What appears can have a certain visible meaning for us, but it can also conceal hidden meanings. Logos, in turn, translates as discourse, reason and judgement and refers to the analytical part of the research. (Smith et al., 2009, p. 24.) In the study of meanings, the research object is not external, foreign or unknown to the researcher's world of meaning. It is likely that the world of meaning to be studied is already familiar to the researcher in some way. (Laine, 2001, p. 32.) Therefore, interpretive work does not start from scratch, hence it can ever be completely impartial.

In an attempt to generate the best interpretation of a phenomenon, Kafle (2011) proposes adopting the use of the hermeneutic cycle. The simple application of the hermeneutic cycle consists of reading, reflective writing and interpretation (Kafle, 2011). Laine (2001, p. 37) illustrates the hermeneutic cycle as a dialogue, a circular movement between the material and one's own interpretation. In turn, Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009, p. 28) describe the hermeneutic cycle as "the dynamic relationship between the part and the

whole, at a series of levels". In short, no given part can be fully understood without grasping the understanding of the whole. Hermeneutic understanding does not appear out of thin air, but is always based on the interpretation of how the object has previously been understood, the fore-structures (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018). The purpose of the conceptually circular movement is to continuously correct and deepen the researcher's understanding (Laine, 2001, p. 37). The core idea of the hermeneutic cycle is in its open-endedness: it is always possible to extend interpretations into new perspectives (Tökkäri, 2018, p. 79).

In the study of experience, it is assumed that the phenomena under study are as such present in the lived reality, but in a form that does not open up to conceptualization and understanding directly. The role of the researcher is to delimit reality through interpretation (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018). The challenge of researching experience based on phenomenological approaches is that the knowledge resulting from the research only applies to individuals and individual cases (Tökkäri, 2018, p. 66). This poses challenges to assessing the reliability and validity of research. Drawing conclusions from individual experiences is considered possible when the contexts of individual cases are sufficiently similar. However, since the experiences of individuals never fully correspond to each other, the knowledge gained from the research is never fully generalizable (Tökkäri, 2018, p. 66). Perttula (1995, p. 44) underlines that in phenomenological research, the central premise for assessing reliability is the researcher's ability to reach the phenomenon as it appears to the subject. Pernecky and Jamal (2010) note that hermeneutic phenomenology is a challenging research endeavour because of the lack of strict rules of interpretation.

In tourism studies, the applications of the phenomenological approach have delved into the lived experiences of tourists, hosts, service providers and other stakeholders that may take part in the tourism phenomenon (Pernecky & Jamal, 2010). Pernecky and Jamal (2010) debate that there are at least two major challenges in employing phenomenology in tourism research. The scholars argue that the challenges arise from (1) the lack of proper methodological guidance and (2) the mere complexity of phenomenological research. Similarly, Kirillova (2018) asserts that despite the growing body of phenomenological studies attempting to gain a thorough understanding of an experience, the potential of phenomenology remains unrealized in hospitality research. According to Kirillova (2018), a big part of the research fails to acknowledge its methodological stance and to clarify the ontological and epistemological assumptions underlying the utilised

methods. These critiques serve as a reminder of the importance of philosophical discussion and theoretical justifications for the research.

In addressing the chosen direction of methodology, a few remarks should also be made on the research of tourist experience in general and the way in which the conceptualization of the tourist experience has changed. In his examination of the conceptual developments of the tourist experience, Natan Uriely (2005) recognized four major developments that have occurred in tourism research in the postmodern era. These developments were "1) a turn from differentiation to de-differentiation of everyday life and touristic experiences, 2) a shift from generalizing to pluralizing conceptualizations, 3) a transformed focus from the toured objects to the tourist subjective negotiation of meanings and 4) a movement from contradictory and decisive statements to relative and complementary interpretations" (Uriely, 2005, p. 199). Firstly, the experiences that have once been considered to be confined to tourism, are now accessible in various contexts of everyday life. Secondly, tourism experiences enjoy plural characteristics both across the body of tourists and subjectively. Additionally, the tourist experience is not solely shaped by the industry and carried out by passive consumers but tourists have an active agency in contributing to the experience. And lastly, whereas the early theories of modern tourism conceptualize the tourist experience in terms of absolute truths, the postmodern tourism characterises the tourist experience with compromising statements. (Uriely, 2005, p. 203-207.)

3.2 Data collection

The scientific criterion for qualitative research data is not the quantity of the material, but its quality and suitability in relation to the phenomenon under study. The method of data collection is derived from the choice of theoretical framework. The aim of the study was to focus on the triggers that result in the experience of shame and guilt, the ways in which shame and guilt are sought to be compensated and/or reduced, and the effects that the experience of shame has had on an individual's travel related consumption practices. With a central focus on experiences of shame and guilt, experiences other than this (no feelings of travel related shame or guilt) were consciously excluded from the material through sampling. The research questions provided for a fairly clear pathway towards the research's sampling design. Patton (2002, p. 228-229) insists that decisions about samples

depend on any prior decisions about the appropriate unit of analysis under study - what does the researcher want to be able to say about something at the end of the study?

In line with the qualitative inquiry, the technique of *purposive or purposeful sampling* was used to define and narrow the target group. According to Kelly (2010, p. 317) in using purposive sampling, to define a research population, a set of eligibility criteria is often set and the goal of the sampling method is to select respondents that are most likely to yield appropriate and useful information. Patton (2002, p. 230), in turn, notes that studying these information-rich cases yields in-depth understanding rather than empirical generalizations. In Patton's (2002) typology, the type of purposeful sampling used in the design of this research could be classified as criterion or theory-based sampling in which the aim is to "find manifestations of a theoretical construct of interest so as to elaborate and examine the construct and its variations" (Patton, 2002, p. 243, see also p. 238-239). In finding the purpose in the research design, Devers and Frankel (2000, p. 264) hold the researcher accountable in designing a sampling frame that is competent in answering the research questions, identifying specific subjects and securing their participation in the study.

Despite the fact that shame and guilt are gender-independent emotions, this study wanted to focus only on the female community. Additionally, due to the cultural nature and manifestations of shame and guilt, the aim was to limit the target group on the basis of culture. For this reason, only women who had grown up in Finland were selected for the interviews. It should also be noted that because IPA as a research approach is idiographic in nature, it is recommended to focus on a smaller homogeneous group of subjects. As the aim of the study is to write in detail about the perceptions and understandings of the participants, the group of participants should be selected based on the understanding that the participants are able to provide a particular perspective on the phenomenon. (Smith et al., 2009, p. 49.) The request for an interview stated that only individuals who admit to feeling ashamed of travel are invited to be interviewed for the study. However, if the interviewee had reported feelings of shame and guilt upon agreeing to the interview, but reported otherwise during the interview, the data were considered relevant to the study and included as part of the research data. A general reluctance to discuss the issues related to shame and guilt is understandable and it was found that these potential signs of reluctance could also be utilized indirectly for research use and research-related interpretations could be made on these observations.

Because the research intended to focus on the four key themes that fit the research questions: triggers, construction of guilt and shame, resistance and disruption, out of the different interview methods, the semi-structured interview was found to provide the best framework. Semi-structured interviews allow the topic to be defined in a meaningful way, but at the same time contribute to the broader subjective reflection of the interviewees. A unique characteristic of semi-structured interviews is the flexibility they provide while allowing for the addressing of the specific dimensions of the research questions. The attention is evenly distributed to both lived experience and theoretically driven variables of interest. (Galletta & Cross, 2013.) The intimate setting of interviews also created and allowed for an atmosphere of trust in which the interviewees could share their confessionals. At the beginning of each interview, I shared the purpose and the objective of the research, gave an outline of the interview structure and made sure that there was consent to record the interview with my interviewees.

The questionnaire for the semi-structured interviews was formulated around the research questions. The formulation process of the research questions subsequently resulted in identifying four themes according to which the questionnaire took its final format. The four different themes were (1) triggers, (2) construction of guilt and shame, (3) resistance and (4) disruption. The questions posed in the interview seek to spark a debate around these mentioned themes and related topics. The loose thematic design of the questionnaire allowed both for the interviewee to better focus on a specific theme of the same topic at a time and for a more efficient analysis of the empirical data for the researcher.

The empirical data of the research consisted of eight semi-structured interviews. The target group of the study was women who have grown up in Finland and who reported experiencing feelings of shame and/or guilt in relation to travel. No clear definition of the terms *guilt*, *shame*, *consumption practices* or *travel* was provided during interviews. The objective in providing no or loose definitions of the namely terms was hoped to result in the experiential nature of guilt, shame and travel being determinable by the respondent herself and transmitted as it is, as the "truth", also to the researcher. Geographical delimitation of the sample was the result of the culturally dependent nature of the self-conscious emotions of shame and guilt. The aim of the study was to exclude the varying influence of different cultures on experiences and responses. In this way, the aim was to increase the homogeneity of the sample and to advance the generalizability of the results.

While the possibility of generalizability is fairly poor considering the choice of methodology and method of analysis, Smith and Osborn (2003, p. 56) point out that while the use of IPA as a method of analysis is not necessarily able to produce general claims on a group or a culture, the findings add to a pool of general claims perhaps strengthening the theoretical generalizability. Additionally, from the perspective of the research analysis, it was found that the target group should be of the same cultural background and speak the same first language as the researcher. This was thought to produce the most valid results as the hermeneutic phenomenological approach was the chosen methodology.

The most familiar method of collecting data when using IPA is semi-structured interviews. The benefit of the data collection method is in its flexibility and the dialogue-like nature of this type of interview. The advantages of the semi-structured interview include the facilitation of empathy and potential introduction of novel topics outside the immediate scope of the research. (Smith & Osborn, 2003, p. 58-59; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014, p. 10-11.) Smith and Osborn (2003, p. 62) suggest that the interview should start with the most general possible question and move to a more specific question. The general guideline suggests that by asking questions in this sequence, the participants are given more room to first share their genuine experiences before funnelling them into more specific questions of particular concern to the researcher.

The incentive for the study stemmed from the increased discussion on the permissibility of travelling observed in different online platforms, Facebook groups dedicated to the topic of travelling in particular, within the past couple of years. Following the debate raised the question of what kind of travelling is or isn't allowed and on what premise? This theme was perceived to have strong undertones of shame and guilt, both clearly articulated but also more subtly referenced by the group members. Observing the discussion on one particular Facebook group led to the identification of the study objective and it was considered that the most suitable place to scout for potential participants for the study was through this namely Facebook group. Thus, the interviewees were scouted from a public Facebook group dedicated to the topic of travelling. A public interview request was posted in the group, to which nine people responded. As a result, a total of nine interviews were conducted for the purpose of this study. Five of the interviews were conducted in November 2021, three in December 2021 and one interview in January 2022. One of the interviews was left out from the empirical

data in order to focus more thoroughly on all of the interviews. The respondents were interviewed using an online meeting platform, Microsoft Teams. In the beginning of the interviews, each respondent was assigned with their own code, H1-8. These codes are used to refer to the respondents accordingly in the analysis chapter. The basic relevant information of the interviewees and the durations of the interviews is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Basic relevant information of interviewees and duration of interviews

Interviewee	H1	H2	H3	H4	H5	H6	H7	H8
Age	28	40	41	61	58	27	36	23
Duration of the interview	53 min	73 min	38 min	37 min	79 min	55 min	52 min	52 min

All of the interviews were conducted by using the same questionnaire but as the semi-structured interviews permit, the focus and depth of the conversation varied based on the replies of the interviewees. The purpose of asking additional clarifying or expanding questions was to further enrich the dialogue and make sense of the respondents' experimental claims. However, intentional effort was made not to steer the conversation based on my own bias or put pressure on the respondents but rather to get further clarity on some of the topics arising in the discussion. The interview questions were divided into four different themes. The overall questionnaire included 20 questions (Appendix I). Phenomenological approaches usually favour empirical data in textual form. The essential feature of the research data is language. (Tökkäri, 2018, p. 70.) Hence, with the permission of the respondents, the interviews were first recorded in Microsoft Teams and then transcribed in textual form. As mentioned, all interviews were conducted in Finnish and thus the transcriptions were also in Finnish. For the purpose and due to the format of this thesis, the citations used to better illustrate findings in the analysis chapter had to be translated from Finnish to English.

3.3 The implementation of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

In this research the phenomenological method of analysis followed is the one of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, IPA. According to Pietkiewicz and Smith (2014, p. 8), IPA, originating from the field of psychology, is the result of synthesized ideas from phenomenology and hermeneutics. The method can be considered both

descriptive and interpretative in its efforts to let things speak for themselves and recognizing that there is no such thing as an uninterpreted phenomenon (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014, p. 8). The objective of IPA is to explore the way in which research participants make sense of their personal and social world. The emphasis on the method is on the detailed examination of personal experiences and individual's personal perception or account of an object or event. The implementation of IPA is a dynamic process that involves an active role of the researcher (Smith & Osborn, 2003, p. 53) and although the researcher's own experiences are openly embedded in the analysis, the aim of the research is to build an interpretation of the interviewees' experiences, not the researcher's own (Tökkäri, 2018, p. 75).

Smith and Osborn (2003, p. 53) refer to the interpretative dialogue between the researcher and the study participant as a two-stage interpretation process, or a double hermeneutic. Larkin, Watts and Clifton (2006, p. 104) suggest that an IPA researcher must approach their data with two aims in mind. The first aim is to understand the interviewees' world and describe it objectively. The second aim is to develop a more overtly interpretative analysis, which allows the positioning of the initial objective, third-person constructed description in relation to a wider social, cultural, and theoretical context. (Larkin et al. 2006, p. 104.)

According to Larkin et al. (2006, p. 117), IPA's phenomenological component maps out the participants' concerns and cares in the form of experimental claims and the interpretative component textualizes these claims while attempting to make sense of the context and meaning that is reality for the person. From this perspective, IPA is considered an approach rather than a particular set of analytical steps that is considered to constitute a method (Larkin et al. 2006, p. 117).

IPA is considered an especially useful method when the research is concerned with complexity, process or novelty (Smith & Osborn, 2003, p. 55). Considering the complexity of studying the self-conscious emotions of shame and guilt, the choice of IPA can be considered as highly suited. Additionally, the suitability of the method for this research is further highlighted with the potential reluctance for the study participants to fully disclose experiences related to shame and guilt. The interference of the researcher's interpretations on non-verbal and non-behavioural communication, eg. facial expressions or pauses in speech, allows for a more in-depth analysis of the state of the matter. Generally speaking, samples in IPA studies are small which allows for a more detailed

analysis. Pietkiewicz and Smith (2014, p. 9) note that the researcher must decide fairly early on in the research whether to focus on a comprehensive in-depth analysis of a particular participant's experiences or present a more general account on a group or specific population. For the purpose of this research, a sample of eight was settled upon due to data saturation.

In relation to the actual analysis phase, as a basic premise, the following six steps in starting to analyse the data are proposed: (1) getting familiar with the data and writing preliminary comments, (2) thematic design, (3) clustering of themes, (4) creating a table of themes, (5) creating a master table of themes, and (6) writing up. Steps 1 to 4 are performed for each interviewee separately. During steps 5–6, the material is processed as a whole. (Tökkäri, 2018, p. 75.)

The suggested six steps of data analysis were followed also in analysing the interview content of this research. Although Smith and Osborn (2003) point out that the suggested structure of analysis is to be adapted by researchers to fit their personal way of working, for the purpose of this research the step-by-step guideline proved to be a well-functioning support in the data-driven analysis of content. The analysis phase began by the reflection of my own premonition as a researcher towards the phenomenon and the subject of the research (see section 3.6.). This part of analysis was done before conducting any of the actual interviews.

In accordance with the framework provided for the use of the method, in the first official phase of analysis, I got acquainted with the interviews by first listening to the interviews multiple times while performing transcription simultaneously. Non-verbal sounds such as laughter and pauses were also transcribed to be able to convey the actual flow of the conversation accurately. I then continued the analysis by reading through the transcript several times both with and without the voice recording. Listening to the audio-recording can assist in immersing oneself in the data and help in providing a more complete analysis (Smith et al, 2009, p. 82). Smith et al. (2009, p. 82) also note that repeated reading does not only aid at ensuring that the participant becomes the focus of analysis but increases understanding of the connections between the sections of the interview.

I then proceeded to underline parts of the text that stood out as relevant and/or meaningful. The left-hand margin of the transcript was then used to annotate any intuitive and spontaneous thoughts and findings I had as a researcher towards the text - mostly

questions, free-flowing remarks and descriptive comments. Special attention was paid to the interviewee's use of wording, reiteration, amplifications and contradictions in the text. (see Smith et al., 2009, s. 83-91.) During the first round of commentary, I further focused on each piece of underlined text and attempted to illustrate why it was underlined and thus meaningful (Smith et al., 2009, p. 91). The objective of the initial noting was to provide a preliminary commentary free of any heavy preconceptions on the data.

The next step was to identify relevant themes arising from the data. This phase required returning to the transcript and reconstructing the initial commentary into emerging themes and concepts. The identification of the themes materialized by considering the material as a whole, i.e., by taking into account the transcription, the resulting comments and the preliminary interview notes. The right-hand margin was used to document emerging theme titles. Smith and Osborn (2003, p. 68) point out that the original notes are to be transformed into concise phrases that seek to capture the essential quality of what was found in the text and what is required from the researcher is the skill to find expressions which are high enough to allow theoretical connections both between and within cases, but which are still based on the specific features of those individual cases. Upon identifying and constructing the arising themes, I applied the approach of hermeneutic cycle that is based on the idea that in order to understand any given part, you need to look to the whole and vice versa. As the process of interpretation is dynamic and non-linear, it facilitates in eg. helping to outline the interviewee's individual statements in the context of their shared history (Smith et al., 2009, p. 28). This in turn helps in mapping out any potential connections, patterns and interrelationships. The intention was to achieve a reflection that would include both the accounts of the participant and my own interpretation (see Smith et al., 2009, p 92). At the second phase, no attempt should be made to select any particular passages for special attention (Smith & Osborn, 2003, p. 70).

The phase of identifying the themes was followed by finding connections between the themes. On a separate sheet, I ordered the list of emergent themes chronologically. This listing allowed me to make sense of the connections between the themes and identify which of the themes were so close in meaning that they could be clustered together. Smith et al. (2009, p. 96) point out that this part of analysis shouldn't fall for mere prescriptiveness but that the analyst should explore in a more interpretative manner in terms of organizing the analysis. The total number of themes identified was initially

relatively large. However, a clear overlap of themes across each textual entity allowed me to reduce the number of emergent themes to a reasonable number and discard some of the themes altogether. The objective was also to establish superordinate themes for the clustered themes for each interview. For this purpose, a new table was created to illustrate the findings.

After having completed the entire process of analysis described above for the first interview, I moved on to the next one and repeated the same steps of analysis with the next interview. The list of themes that emerged from previous interviews was purposefully put aside for the duration of the first four phases of each interview analysis. By doing so, I was hoping to be able to identify virgin themes from novel transcripts and realize the idiographic aspiration of the IPA method.

Once each transcript was analysed, a final master table combining all superordinate and subordinate themes was constructed from the entire body of data. Based on the thematic tables of all the individual interviews, I compiled one more table in which I organized common or identical themes of all eight interviews. The process of analysis proceeded by examining the similarities and differences in themes between the interviews. I found this part of analysis to be the most challenging thus far as the attempt was to recognize not only the frequency of the themes but also their relevance in relation to the study in question. One of the most challenging tasks was to try to form cross-cutting themes throughout the material so that the richness of individual experiences is not covered under broad entities.

At this stage, I once more returned to each individual interview, applying the interpretation model of the hermeneutic circle. Circling back to the table of both superordinate and subordinate themes, I grouped, reallocated, eliminated and renamed the themes I had originally found. I then returned to the level of the written text as I picked up suitable citations from the transcriptions to describe the subordinate themes outlined. The subordinate themes were further refined after determining the citations.

In assessing the reliability of the research, a few matters should be taken into account. In any qualitative research, implementing reliability in its basic definition of replicability is challenging. In this research, both epistemologically and methodologically, reality is the result of interpretation. Because interpretations are personal, they are not replicable as such. However, the use of IPA as a research method provides for a trail of audit that

performs as a source of consistency and traceability. The researcher's ability to grasp the phenomenon as it appears to the subject is the key in assessing reliability when using phenomenological approaches (Perttula, 1995, p. 44). Smith and Osborn (2003, p. 75) note that during the analysis, attention should also be paid to the richness of the particular clauses that highlight the themes. While the aim of IPA is also to focus on the language used in interviews, in this research it was not possible to get to the micro-textual level of analysis. The research material is in Finnish and the citations had to be translated into English for the purpose of this thesis. Despite the best effort in translation work, there may be nuances that differentiate the original statement from the English translation. However, the analysis itself was performed based on the interviews in their original language. Use of words were only highlighted in the analysis if they were found to strongly illustrate a very similar account that was transcribed in Finnish.

3.4 Ethical considerations

As already mentioned in the introduction of this methodology chapter, in accordance with good scientific practice, considerations for ethical aspects of research have guided the preparation and the process of my dissertation from the very beginning. Getting accustomed with the responsible conduct of research is the starting point for following the principles of integrity, meticulousness, and accuracy endorsed by the research community (TENK, 2012). According to Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018), good research is guided by ethical commitment. This section shortly illustrates the common ethical considerations from the perspective of both qualitative research in general and this research in particular.

A central concept in ethical research practice is informed consent. Informed consent is concerned with providing study participants with clear information about what participating in a research project will involve and allowing them the opportunity to also withdraw from the study. (Wiles, 2013, p. 25.) As the study participants in this research were found through an open interview inquiry, the decision to participate in the study was made by the interviewee. While this willingness to participate indicates consent, interviewees were further informed about their right to decline answering some or any questions at the beginning of the interviews. The interviewees were also informed about their right to withdraw from participating in the research at any stage without it causing any inconvenience or sanctions. Before the interviews, the interviewees were informed

of the purpose and objectives of the study both orally and in written format. As the interviews were held online, the participants were sent the letter of consent in Finnish via email to read and sign before the interviews.

While the subject matter of this research isn't necessarily classified as sensitive in nature, the shared experiences are very personal. In sharing their personal experiences of shame and guilt, the study participants rely on the researcher and her ability not only to collect, process and store the obtained data in a proper manner but also to interpret it. Hence, the choice of conducting phenomenological research itself creates a challenge from an ethical perspective. While the endeavour is to locate, explore, and describe the experiences shared by the participants, an issue of accurate interpretation becomes evident - how is the researcher able to convey the realities of participants without having those realities interfere with the researcher's own sense of reality? An ethical dilemma also arises when the researcher identifies with the experiences under study. If such a case were to occur, heightened awareness in focusing on the experience of only the participant is required from the researcher. (Tökkäri, 2018, p. 70.) While the hermeneutic phenomenological approach permits the interference of the researcher's assumptions and premonitions, the focus of the research should be on the data obtained through the chosen method(s). In order to avoid mixing the reality of the researcher with the data, section 3.4. on researcher's premonition attempts to illustrate prior knowing, assumptions, prejudice or bias related to the research subject. According to Laine (2001, p. 36) research begins with questioning spontaneous understanding.

In the context of research, confidentiality means that identifiable information about individuals collected during the research process is not disclosed and that the identities of study participants are protected by various processes designed to anonymize them. Participants need to be informed about how confidentiality and anonymity will be managed in the sense that they must be aware of (1) what will happen to the data, (2) how the data will be reported, (3) whether it will be possible for them to be identified from these data and (4) what the implications of that might be for them. (Wiles, 2013, p. 41.) The anonymity of study participants is ensured by omitting or modifying the identifying details of the participants (Tökkäri, 2018, p. 70). In most cases, the process of anonymisation occurs through creating pseudonyms applied to research participants. However, according to Wiles (2013, p. 41), confidentiality can never be fully assured in qualitative research. There is no way for the researcher to guarantee that despite the

endeavour of anonymisation, the participants won't be identified. While complete anonymity may be challenging to achieve, all identifying data should be removed prior to publication. (Wiles, 2013, p. 51.) In this study, each interviewee was assigned with their own code, H1-8. At the beginning of the interview, the researcher recited the assigned code aloud and thus only the code was recorded in the transcription material. The interview recordings were then properly discarded, leaving the transcriptions only to be identified with the help of a code. The ethical principles related to the handling and storing of all research material were also taken into account throughout the research process.

3.5 The researcher's premonition

According to Laine (2001, p. 30), all human research is based on some conception of "a man" and humans cannot be understood in isolation from their relationship to their world. Since phenomenology in its examination is limited to what only appears to us as being experienced, in an attempt to avoid immersing my own experiences with those of my interviewees, I reflected on my own understanding of the phenomenon as a researcher before the interviews were conducted. As the subject of the study is the result of personal interest, it is evident that there is prior knowledge, assumptions, prejudice and bias related to the subject matter and related phenomenon. As the hermeneutic approach permits, this prior knowledge and experiences can be used as a tool in analysing the research data but are not to be interfered with data itself. In this section, I will provide a brief account of my premonition as a researcher.

Firstly, as a researcher, my premonition is that the experiences and feelings of travel-related shame and guilt are culturally and socially constructed, yet subjective, as previous research also demonstrates. There may be differences in subjective experiences, but I also assume that cultural and social factors influence both of how much and what kind of shame and guilt individuals experience. Social factors are also expected to determine whether shame motivates prosocial action. In their study on shame as a commitment device, de Hooge, Breugelmans and Zeelenberg (2008) were able to determine that shame motivated prosocial action in situations where others were aware of the aspect triggering shame. If others were not aware of the aspect triggering shame, shame did not affect behaviour. Thus, in the research context it can be assumed that if an individual experiences travel-related shame or guilt, social aspects determine whether the individual

will attempt to remedy or account for their travel behaviour. Phenomenology itself also includes the idea that the human individual is essentially communal. The meanings that construct the reality are not innate in us, but are originated in a community. Man is a cultural being. (Laine, 2001, p. 31.)

Secondly, I assumed that there are several triggers that result in the experience of shame and/or guilt, with varying emphasis. Additionally, shame and guilt are likely to be attempted to be compensated for in some way: either by taking action, justification and rationing. Because both current research and general media coverage on travel-related shame and guilt is so heavily focused on climate and environmental issues, I assume that the content of the majority of my interviews is also mainly focused on this aspect. As a result, it can also be assumed that travel-related shame and guilt is a "privilege" reserved mainly for the Western world and global North, where travel is leisurely rather than necessity. With reference to this, I assume that the tendency to guilt is related to both personal and cultural values.

4 THE EXPERIENCES OF SHAME AND GUILT IN TRAVEL CONSUMPTION

The objective of this chapter is to present the findings of the research and aim at revealing and dissecting how guilt and shame shape the experiences of travel consumption for female travellers. As postulated, environmental issues as articulated triggers for guilt and shame dominated in the responses of the participants. However, the data demonstrates that the experiences of shame and guilt are far more complex than the sole descriptions of a single trigger. The experience of tourism consumption and guilt and shame is strongly constructed in the dialogue of two themes: what is permissible tourism and how individuals perceive their own role or position in relation to feelings of shame and guilt. The data illustrates a distinct and articulated contradiction between what is perceived as permissible and how individuals relate themselves to that perception. The experiences of guilt and shame are actually constructed in this intermediate terrain of contradiction.

The chapter of analysis thus illustrates three aspects of travel-related guilt and shame: 1) how does the idea of permissibility of travel manifest in the confessionals, 2) how do the respondents relate their own action or inaction to the socially constructed idea of permissible travel, i.e., how the perceived shameful act of travel is justified and resisted in relation to others, and 3) how do the feelings of guilt and shame pose a threat to the

perceived qualities of travel experience. These three aspects are closely tied to the original research questions and facilitate in outlining the core findings emerging from the data.

The first section of this chapter, *Creatures of habit and limited choice*, provides a short illustration of the general world of experience the interviewees represent in relation to the feelings of travel-related guilt and shame. The subsequent sections of this chapter then illustrate three superordinate themes that capture the participants' key experiences of travel-related guilt and shame. The themes function as a figurative springboard for more conceptual analysis presented in the discussion chapter. The three superordinate themes are *Looking for permission to travel*, *Boundaries of action* and *Threat of guilt and shame*. The three themes were constructed in accordance with their holistic relevance and appearance in the experiences of the participants. The first superordinate theme includes two subordinate themes. The two other superordinate themes include three subordinate themes. The subordinate themes aim at illustrating each superordinate theme from a different perspective. The three superordinate themes are closely intertwined and together illustrate the analysed moral frustration and discrepancies that are present in the experiences of travel-related guilt and shame.

4.1 Creatures of habit and limited choice

I begin the analysis section of my dissertation by reviewing the world of experience of my interviewees on a more general level. This section provides a foundation for the more detailed analysis ahead. Understanding the premise for the act of travelling also helps to better understand how feelings of guilt and shame occur in travel contexts and construct the experience of consumption. In this section I focus on painting a coherent yet idiographic image of how the interviewees relate themselves to the feelings of travel-related guilt and shame.

When asked what kind of thoughts and feelings tourism and travel prompted in the interviewees at the time of the interview, the replies led to two strings of thought. On one hand, the idea of travelling was perceived as positive - the opening up of tourism in the midst of a global pandemic was highly anticipated. One of the interviewees, H5, described her own experience in stating that she had *pent-up need for travel*. On the other hand, the idea of traveling evoked conflicting feelings, mainly related to the theme of permissibility and negative effects of travel. Many interviewees felt that travelling and going on a trip was not currently morally acceptable.

Interviewees were also asked how they would define feelings of guilt and shame and whether these feelings could somehow be differentiated. Most of the interviewees were able to differentiate the two emotions. Shame was mostly experienced as a social emotion and was related principally to the violation of societal norms. Guilt, in turn, was regarded as an emotion present in the awareness of wrongdoing and causing conflict in personal values. Some of the respondents also described guilt as *more personal* and *stronger*. However, in sharing their experiences, the participants used the two terms often interchangeably or referenced to both at the same time. Only in the clear instances that they acknowledged the occupancy of social context, did they use the term shame or being ashamed.

In the research data, all interviewees mentioned one cause of shame or guilt over others, the effects of tourism on the environment and the climate. All respondents admitted to being aware of the negative effects of travelling, especially air travel, on the climate crisis. The effects of tourism on environmental and ecological aspects were considered significant and environmental values were considered meaningful values. However, only one of the interviewees disclosed that they had stopped flying altogether. Three of the respondents affiliated the discussion around environmental factors and flying as a form of activism. The question of the impact of environmental factors on feelings of guilt and shame mainly prompted descriptions of the aspects of tourism that were perceived as being harmful to the environment. The respondents primarily reflected on the different options in travel that could result in more responsible choices. They also compared their own resources to these options, weighing whether the option correlated strongly and positively enough with their available resources.

Another prevalent trigger emerging from the data was human rights and the idea of exploitation and privilege that was affiliated with it. This theme was mainly reflected from the perspective of privilege and was strongly associated with personal values. Visits to countries with human rights issues were generally perceived as problematic and three of the interviewees described avoiding such destinations altogether: I don't know what it would take for me to step foot on a place like that (H8). These respondents experienced that choosing a destination country was the most explicit way to travel responsibly.

While rigorous in some aspects, the shared experience of the participants is that of limited options in making sustainable and responsible choices. In regards to choice, many of the participants also reflected on their personal resources. The respondents experienced that there were aspects of time, ease and finance, convenience factors, that constrained them from making responsible choices: “Well, I would travel by some other means than by plane if it were possible ... if I had the time to do so” (H4). In addition to appealing to the limitations of options, different “tactics” of justification could be interpreted from the shared experiences of the participants. These tactics can also be considered to illustrate resistance to the feelings of guilt and shame.

The data also provides evidence on habitual consumption behaviour. Instead of entirely banning themselves from travelling by plane (except for one respondent) the respondents attempted to find and suggest options that could lead to more sustainable travel without risking their personal convenience and comfort. Hence, it was clearly difficult for the respondents to give up entirely the advantage of convenient travel they had already obtained in the past. In addition, the lack of alternatives was perceived as both a challenge and a constraint in making a choice that would both respect their personal values and maintain the perceived ease, comfort and joy associated with ideal travel. This phenomenon can also be referred to as *the value-action gap*.

The aspect of resistance connects strongly to the idea of permissibility in the travel context. In recognizing their shame and guilt, most of the respondents also reflected the associated social context. Generally, most of the experiences revealed an underlying fear of judgement of others. The experiences of the respondents also made it possible to characterize what was perceived as unauthorized, forbidden and condemned travel. When positive travel-related experiences and permissibility perceived through the social context collide, it creates a significant contradictory space in travel. According to my interpretation, feelings of shame and guilt also arise within this contradiction. Individuals attempt to adapt their negative emotions to the expectations of others and the self. The interviewees themselves are also able to recognize and articulate this contradiction: “-- in a way, there is that kind of conflict of values in that I want to save the world while I’m simultaneously destroying it” (H1). Interviewee H4 recounts aptly her experiences in the light of this illustrated contradiction: “Can I stop (travelling) now .. after I have been doing it for so long .. at what point could I then think that now I have seen enough” (H4).

Lastly, it is worth noting that despite the findings that culture plays a major role in both the amount of guilt and shame that is felt, the respondents were generally hesitant or unable to recognize the role or the impact of their own cultural background and upbringing in the feelings of guilt and shame.

4.2 Looking for permission to travel

The first superordinate theme arising from the data is referred to as *Looking for permission to travel*. This superordinate theme is concerned with the participants' experiences related to perceived permissibility of travel and the impact of social context on the experiences of guilt and shame in particular. The subordinate themes aim at illustrating the recognized standing of others in relation to guilt and shame and experienced moral inadequacy. The first subordinate theme, *Social withdrawal*, illustrates how the experiences and perceptions of permissibility show up as reactions to other people, primarily through silence and fear of revelation. The second subordinate theme, *Unauthorized travel*, includes the accounts of forbidden and shameful tourism from a social point of view.

4.2.1 Social withdrawal

The subordinate theme of *Social withdrawal* depicts participants' experiences of withdrawal, becoming exposed, or being condemned in connection with feelings of shame in social contexts. These descriptions unanimously obtain meaning through accounts of silence as well as being and staying quiet. The subordinate theme of social withdrawal connects with the superordinate theme of permissibility through the contradiction of perceived permission and self-conception.

The experiences of H8, H1 and H3 reflected a threat to outer self through travel confession: the participants worried that their social status would change upon the confession about having travelled or planning on travelling. Upon disclosing her reluctance to publicly share about her travels, H8 continues to reflect on the implications of the sharing to her public self:

> -- maybe then some of those like a little more distant people .. kind of .. their thoughts about .. that .. but on the other hand .. their thoughts don't matter as much as the thoughts of those who are close to me but kind of how that .. how would I

> come across as and then in a way I feel like I am a well-thought-of person and that would be very different from how I usually behave and how people usually feel about me .. I would then put myself in a very different position in that social circle .. or somehow under a different kind of gaze (H8)

H8 speculates that her engagement in tourism-related activities, or at least sharing about them, would put her in a different position in the social circle. From the extract, it can be interpreted that because H8 feels that she is a generally likeable person, engaging in a socially condemned activity such as travel could change how others view her, as she is perhaps perceived to act against social norms. The respondents' experiences are in line with the social self-preservation theory by Gruenewald et al. (2007) that postulates that shame is a social reaction that signals threat to the social self. While H8 accounts that the thoughts of a little more distant people - perhaps acquaintances - don't matter as much to her, she still admits to her doubt of how she would come across. Comparing distant people to those that are close to her would indeed suggest a threat to her outer self. People that are close to H8, can perhaps be seen as having better access or being more in tune with what the respondent perceives as her inner self.

When asked about the impact of other people and relationships on the feelings of guilt and shame, H1 shares a fairly similar experience about being under the gaze of others:

> -- I don't feel that I get any kind of criticism from my loved ones or my family .. it's more those half-acquaintances and the like who .. yeah I mean sure .. it kind of has an impact in a way that sometimes I wonder if it's silly for me to say like this or do this or share this but it's not like it actively interferes with or affects my activities or gives me sleepless nights but maybe it's more in a manner of .. what a bummer that someone thinks like that .. but they can continue to live in their own imaginary world .. if they think they know better how I live my life then they probably do .. it doesn't interest me terribly in the end, although on the other hand it does interest me of course because it irritates me (H1)

H1 questions if it's silly for her to share about her travels with others, questioning her willingness to expose herself and her behaviour to others. She provides a similar comparison with H8 to loved ones and half-acquaintances in also suggesting that she places values on these groups differently. The thoughts of half-acquaintances don't

prompt her to change her behaviour or give her sleepless nights, suggesting the lack of paralyzing threat to self, but they do interest and irritate her. She is interested in how others view her.

Similarly, H3 reflects about her habits of sharing about travels in relation to how others view her. She reflects this in relation to the perspective that not everyone has the opportunity to travel:

> -- probably one of the motives not to boastfully share about travelling is that it could then give the impression that I have money .. although the fact is that flight tickets are outrageously cheap, which in turn contributes to more travel (H3)

However, H3's account is not entirely clear and could be interpreted in two ways: either she could perceive herself as being viewed as insensitive when sharing about her travels while some don't have the opportunity to do so, or she could perceive herself as not being the kind of person who spends money on travel and wishes to stay that way. Either way, both readings of the extract would suggest H3's reluctance to change how others view her in the present moment. The accounts of H8, H1 and H3 are here interpreted through the idea of threat of outer self and external shame. External shame is prompted by the potential of "getting caught" in engaging socially shamed behaviour (Gilbert, 1998, p. 21) and while individuals may be ashamed by the scrutiny of others, the shame is not necessarily internalised in the sense that the individuals can consider that they have not done anything bad or wrong per se.

In addition to outer self, the act of sharing poses a threat to change in inner self, as is depicted by respondent H4:

> -- when I stop to think about the fact that something has changed in the way that I do things .. then it has to do with the fact that I keep my travels more hidden .. maybe it's some sort of .. it's my own belief that very responsible and that sort of people don't travel at the moment .. and I'm not like that if I travel .. I guess it does matter to me since I don't publicly celebrate it (travel) as much as I did before (H4)

The excerpt illustrates how sharing about her travels, or the act of travelling, would potentially affect the respondent's image of oneself: she would not be a responsible person. In line with the findings of shame experiences often relating to being flawed or exposed (Lindsay-Hartz, 1984), she seems to be able to place herself in the position of the other and as if to reflect on how the revelation or being exposed would affect or alter her own sense of herself. She recounts that something has changed in the way that she shares about her travels and that she doesn't celebrate her travels publicly as much as she did before.

H8 also ponders what would be the implications of her sharing something about her travels to social media:

> -- if I were to travel then I would think if I dared to share anything about it on social media then if the topic came up then I would feel like I should explain why I am going now (H8)

She wonders if she would *dare* to share something because then she would have to *explain why* she is travelling. She is hesitant to take the risk of sharing as she then would have to justify her behaviour to others. By experiencing the threat of having to justify herself, it would suggest that she sustains a presumption that travelling will be socially condemned.

Experiences narrated by the interviewees were strongly related to some sort of social benchmarking: the silence suggests that they feared being exposed in social situations. Even though the respondents didn't clearly articulate the impact of potential revelation, their actions illustrate a perceived threat or unease to self that confronting other people could bring about. All the descriptions of these experiences are further intertwined with the perceived change in the social and societal landscape in relation to travel: what used to be socially acceptable is no more.

The accounts of silence aim at illustrating and verifying the findings also presented by scholars Barrett (1995, p. 26, 41, 44), Lindsay-Hartz (1984) and Gruenewald, Dickerson and Kemeny (2007, p. 72-73) on the action tendency of withdrawal often associated with shame. Additionally, de Hooge et al. (2011, p. 203) suggest that the approach behaviour resulting from shame is dependent on the situation. The scholars found that endogenous (coming from within) shame motivates prosocial behaviour. de Hooge et al. (2011, p.

202) suggest that avoidance behaviours are primarily only the secondary option used to protect the self when approach behaviours, such as atonement, are considered not possible or too risky. However, it can be open to debate whether the experience of being quiet can be considered an act in the context of shame.

4.2.2 Unauthorized travel

The accounts of unauthorized travel depict the experiences the respondents link to being as sorts of objects of potential shaming. They reflect their own travelling habits and the perceived impact or influence on other people. The accounts illustrate experiences that the interviewees relate to the socially forbidden quality or element of travel. While the experiences of unauthorized travel mainly focus on the experience of how travel is being sympathized with by the respondents' social connections, they also reveal that the respondents actively consider how their travel behaviour would make others feel.

H5 experienced most of her travel-related guilt stemming from the pressure of obligation. When she was on holiday, she was out of reach from those who needed her at home:

> -- if I'm traveling then I have the biggest guilt just for not being able to be by the phone, that is, answering the phone and going to help if help is needed there and .. that's the biggest thing .. (H5)

H5 describes here the pressure of being needed and not being able to return that need. The respondent considers her own obligations as important and significant to other people. Being on travels results in her being unable to fulfil this obligation as desired. She experiences guilt about her journey because she is unable to meet the needs of other people. H5 shares a similar experience of obligation with H7:

> .. then there have actually been such (feelings of shame and guilt) during the trip, so I haven't been able to enjoy it (travel) quite the way it is .. when my spouse is at home missing me and I too miss him/her .. (H7)

In her interview, H7 reflects on her experiences while being in (her most recent) relationship. Her willingness to travel had caused some tension in the relationship: “s/he experienced these negative thoughts about it then .. that I want to leave (for travels) even

though I was in a relationship -- they were .. significant value choices always .. when to leave and when to stay" (H7). In the first extract, H7 articulates clearly that she has not been able to *enjoy* her travels fully while in a relationship because her spouse misses her. This could suggest that she feels obliged to her spouse. She also admits to missing her spouse too but still feels shame. She considers the disharmony of her spouse and her own needs a significant value choice. Despite the discrepancy experienced by the respondent, the experiences of shame and guilt can also function as reins in guiding a person towards better acknowledging personal goals and values (Lindsay-Hartz, 1984). H5 in turn feels that she needs to have an explanation or a reason for her travels:

> ..that is, the whole idea of what travel originally is about .. it has somehow dimmed .. when I have to always have some reasoning that I dare to leave .. that is .. I have completely forgotten about the traditional holiday travel.. (H5)

She feels that going purely on a leisurely holiday does no longer simply suffice in a social context. She refers to *the idea of what travel originally is about*, presumably a period of leisure and recreation. She feels hesitant about leaving for travels, because she feels that she needs to have a justification for it. When asked why the respondent feels that she needs to have a reason to travel, she replied: ".. someone might think I am not entitled to it.." (H5).

H4 talks about how she thinks people worry about her when she's traveling, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic:

> .. maybe the fact that it causes people worry when travelling during this time, so it's not necessarily nice that people have to worry about me being out and about in the world .. (H4)

H4 reflects her own actions on the feelings of others. She contemplates that causing others such unpleasantness as worry, is *not necessarily nice*. It could be then interpreted that she considers herself as responsible for the worry of others while travelling. All the above extracts illustrate how the respondents carry the emotional burden of others' thoughts and feelings. As if they feel obliged to support the feelings of others. The experiences of obligation and worry tie to the dimension of social responsibility guilt that Burnett and Lunsford (1994) consider as part of consumer guilt. Social responsibility guilt has the

potential to occur when one violates one's perceived social obligations, such as family obligations, as a result of a purchase decision which here is considered the consumption decision of travel.

Interviewee H5 reported her shameful experiences in travel context in relation to her own position in perceived social class:

> -- but when this sort of ordinary middle-class family like ours went on a trip and we had a lot of these working-class acquaintances then my god .. you felt obliged to be ashamed .. in a manner of .. are you trying to be better than you actually are .. (H5)

She refers to her family as an ordinary middle-class family, comparing that to her working-class acquaintances. This comparison could be interpreted as a perceived ranking of permissibility for different social statuses. When the respondent's middle-class family goes on travels, she experiences that they are considered as *trying to be better than they actually are*. This is as if the respondent outlines the possibility of travel as reserved only for the highest social classes. This interpretation is supported when H5 also notes that she felt somehow *obliged* to feel ashamed.

H6 also describes her own experience through social status:

> -- I get this sense of .. okay .. did I think I was above the others and it did make me feel ashamed afterwards (H6)

The experience of interviewee H6 was related to the situation in which she had decided to travel back home to Finland from abroad where she normally resides during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of her friends had decided not to travel. H6's decision to travel made her feel ashamed, and she reflected on that feeling in relation to her own privilege: she had the experience of imagining herself being "above" others. The context also reveals the experienced pressure of social norms. Her image of herself as being perceived as above others reflects the act of breaking social norms and is experienced in this instance as negative.

The impact of financial aspects on the acceptability of travel emerged in the experiences of several interviewees. H1 reflected on the concept of acceptability strongly in relation to her own financial status:

> -- some sort of strange shame about the fact that it's possible for me because it's some sort of .. the comment people make is that it's easy for you to go just like that and you also swim in money (H1)

> -- you can't show that it is possible or it can't be possible or it can't .. for me it's more in the manner of that it bothers me that someone makes their own assumptions on my financial situation or my .. they kind of think do I pay it myself or does someone else pay or do my parents pay (H1)

The first extract illustrates a response elicited by the question whether travelling produced any feelings of guilt or shame to the respondent. She almost immediately positioned herself in an imaginary social situation and reflected on how others (would) react to her travelling. She was aware that she has the possibility to travel, as depicted here through ease and financial situation. She also admitted to being ashamed of her possibility, which would suggest that she perceives herself as somehow breaking a social norm, as travelling comes so, as if too, easy to her. Easy is the opposite of difficult and in this context, difficult is not possible. Additionally, the use of the word *strange* could suggest that H1 is hesitant about her feelings of shame - whether she should be feeling them or not.

In its essence, the second extract demonstrates a fairly similar experience about travelling being possible to the respondent H1. However, the second extract focuses more on the experience of what others think of who pays for her travel. In reflecting on what others think, she proposed that others may think that someone else or her parents pay for her travels. This would suggest that H1 constructs the idea of social permissibility on the premise of needing to pay for one's own travels. The possibility of travel is open if one is solely responsible for covering the costs. While the respondent uses the word *shame* in the first extract in describing her experience, the accounts could be considered to be more in consistency with the phenomenological experience of guilt that includes the sense of responsibility (Lindsay-Hartz, 1984). However, that is not to say that the experience could entail only either one of the emotions, but can also encompass both in different aspects of the same experience.

Similar supposition about the responsibility of covering one's own travel costs is shared by the respondent H7:

> I received those .. social benefits .. at the time .. so it had this .. this sort of .. what if I had directed that money somewhere .. towards something recommended by the care providers .. if I had directed that money there .. so it's kind of a balancing act (H7)

While receiving social benefits, H7 had used that money on travelling and felt partially guilty of doing so. She reflected on her feeling of guilt in relation to how others recommended she should have spent her money. In her interview, H7 described her experiences about travelling as having been helpful on her path to recovery from an illness. Reference to a balancing act refers to the contradiction of the experienced benefit from travel and the social expectation of how she should have spent her social benefits. H7 also recounted an encounter she had with two other people who publicly discussed that they felt that it was not appropriate to use social benefits on travel: "-- in that moment it felt uncomfortable to be at that breakfast table .." (H7).

Being ashamed or guilty of travelling while receiving social benefits would suggest an existing social expectation of how benefits should be used. And the presence of shame and other uncomfortable emotions would suggest that travelling is not covered by this permissibility. Respondent H5 also shared her experience about travelling while receiving social benefits:

> We were considered pretty shameless .. how dare we .. sure I was ashamed that we were living the high life on social benefits (H5)

H5 experienced that they (her family) were considered *shameless* because they were travelling while receiving social benefits. This again illustrates the experienced social expectation of how benefits should be used. H5 had moved to live abroad with her family in the 1990s and in her interview she reflects on this experience mainly through the themes of shame and permissibility. In the extract, H5 depicts her family *living the high life on social benefits* and this makes her feel ashamed. Interestingly she does not go into more detail about what constitutes a high life to her. This reference could either be

interpreted as her own experience of what their life was like abroad or a perceived social reading on what life abroad is considered to be like in general. The respondent admitting to feeling ashamed of doing so would suggest that this, *living the high life*, should not be possible while receiving social benefits. Consistent with Lehtinen's (1995, p. 8-9; 1998, p. 42) findings, shame can be intertwined with authority and power as stigma and shame systematically produce feelings of inadequacy for the lower in the social hierarchy.

The experience shared by H6 would seem to confirm the perceived social expectation of the (better) quality of life abroad:

> When you live abroad you'll get these comments that .. you have such a great life and then, in a way, you start to feel ashamed of how .. is it really a privilege to have been able to do these things or have I just made a few different choices in life (H6)

The extract illustrates a kindred sort of experience of the possibility of travel as it did for H1. Here H6 uses the word *privilege* to illustrate her possibility for having travelled and living abroad. However, she does not fully agree to the sole idea of privilege but also asserts the possibility of others having the power of choice. The excerpt also describes H6's personal attitude to travel: if travel is a privilege, it is reprehensible, but if it is the result of the choices made, it is not as shameful.

The interviewees' experiences also highlighted the social assumption of the futility or vanity of travel:

> Some people consider that it (travelling) is wasting money in which case it is something .. something outlandish or .. somehow it shouldn't be possible (H1)

> I'm doing .. wrong and I'm behaving .. badly because I'm wasting money on that .. (H5)

> -- there is kind of the money aspect also because sometimes I do feel ashamed about how many tons (of money) I wasted on some trip (H2)

> -- it's that this money could have been spent to do good for others but here I am just enjoying myself (H8)

Three of the respondents use the word *waste* to indicate how travel in a broader social context is perceived as an act of vanity. Wasting money on travel is described in the extracts as outlandish, wrong and as an act of bad behaviour. In the case of respondent H2, the presence of social context is not entirely clear but as she also uses the wording *waste*, it would indicate an assumption as travel being a wasteful act. The context of respondent H8 is that of perceived privilege. She reflects on her role as a traveller in destinations with poorer standards of living. She considers that the money she had spent on travelling could have been used to do good for others (the residents of the travel destinations). In her comparison of herself enjoying herself and the perceived pressure or guilt in doing good acts could suggest that here a vanity aspect is also at play. The theme of travel as vanity and privilege can be considered to be related to the morality of one's action or inaction.

The theme of unauthorized travel also taps into the phenomenon of travel shaming. The section of social withdrawal illustrated this in the form of prosocial behaviour. To a broader extent, the experiences could also be linked to the concept of consumer misbehaviour. Contrary to the way in which Fullerton and Punj (1997, 2004) list shoplifting, vandalism and physical or verbal abuse as means of consumer misbehaviour, the experiences of the respondents of this study exhibit a more subtle mechanism of behaviour that can be considered as violating generally accepted standards of behaviour in consumption situations. The experiences of the respondents construct an image of socially unacceptable means of consumption, the result of which is travel. Misbehaviour is constructed in accordance with perceived social standing and financial implications in particular. The respondents experienced the threat of being shamed if disclosing their travel plans. Also some of the participants themselves experienced that some types of travel behaviour were less acceptable than others:

> -- some of my close friends have been traveling in Europe now and even during this fall then somehow .. or I have felt envious of it and yet such .. maybe that sort of slight shaming .. or of course everyone does what they want and is responsible for their own actions but somehow it feels like .. I wouldn't dare to travel just yet (H8)

In the extract, H8 compares her travel behaviour during the COVID-19 pandemic to that of her friends. She admits to feeling envious of her friends who had travelled. She also notes that she would not *dare* to travel just yet. It can be interpreted that this sense of *daring* refers to the breaking of social norms.

> Dubai is a good example of such a place where all these social media celebrities constantly go to and fro .. so yes I somehow wish they knew to be ashamed of it (H8)

> -- because when you say that this is how I operate because I feel what I did was wrong then people very easily consider it as me shaming them and shaming is anyway a strategy that works really poorly .. it would be nice to be able to handle it in a way that would not come across as me trying to tell other people that they are bad because that is not the point .. the point is that we're trying to make this world a little more righteous place (H6)

The unauthorized elements of travel are constructed in the accounts of the interviewees mainly through social status. Travel is possible for the privileged. This possibility limited by privilege is reflected, among other things, in the interviewees' experiences of traveling during a period when they have received social benefits, when they have not traditionally been seen as privileged. In a contradictory way, the privilege itself is also seen as reprehensible. Privilege breeds resentment, perhaps in the form of envy. Experiences of reprehensible travel are also described through duty. The idea of duty is constructed primarily in relation to other people and what kind of inconvenience or resentment the travel of the interviewees causes to other people. My broad interpretation is that all these experiences can be linked to the hedonism associated with travel and tourism. The hedonism of tourism is constructed in the experiences of the interviewees as a reprehensible phenomenon.

4.3 Boundaries of action

The superordinate theme of *Boundaries of action* focuses on the experiences of action. It aims at illustrating how the respondents relate their own action or inaction to the socially constructed idea of permissible travel that was analysed in more detail in the two previous

sections. The purpose of the theme is to showcase how the perceived shameful act of travel is justified and resisted in relation to others. This section too focuses on the social aspects of travel-related guilt and shame. The theme is built on three subordinate themes. The first subordinate theme, *Benefit to others*, illustrates how the respondents perceive their travel behaviour in generating benefit to others. The second subordinate theme, *Temporality and easiness*, depicts how the respondents resist their feelings of shame and guilt through their lack of resources, time and convenience to be exact. And lastly, the third subordinate theme *Self-detachment, accountability and putting matters into perspective* illuminates on a more conceptual and even emotional level how the respondents attempt at breaking free from shame and guilt.

4.3.1 Benefit to others

In sharing their experiences of travel-related guilt and shame, respondents H2, H4 and H5 referenced their own positive influence on others in the travel context. These accounts can be considered to illustrate the approach behaviours associated with shame that aim at restoring the self (de Hooge et al., 2011, p. 202). H2 shared how she perceived the impact of her financial resources to the travel destinations:

> -- many times when I have travelled .. especially if we have gone to these not so popular destinations I've always thought of it in a way that .. okay this money I bring with me supports local living and local life -- that my money is left there for the locals so I somehow feel like I support that area .. more .. (H2)

H2 refers to *not so popular destinations* as places lacking existing tourist infrastructure. She feels it's important that she provides support for communities outside that strong infrastructure. H2 sees travel as a kind of barter: ".. then the money I spend on the spot .. so in a way I kind of feel that my spending and also travel are done better if the money goes to local people and doesn't go to some higher authority or somewhere else .." (H2). It could be interpreted that she feels that her travels are more acceptable and responsible if there is awareness of where she directs or wishes to direct her resources.

H2 also finds her travelling to more secluded destinations maintained by locals as more sustainable: "I was left with the feeling that now that I went there, the money was left there to help them. And maybe my visit wasn't so terribly stressful for the environment

either" (H2). In both of the extracts, there is an invisible if-then condition at play: if I use my money on travels to support local communities, then my travels are more responsible and sustainable. This interpretation on the responsibility idea relies on the respondent's use of wording *my spending and also travel <u>are done better,</u>* perhaps suggesting that she also feels that there is room for improvement. The extracts illustrate the licensing effect, performance of a good deed to mitigate negative emotions, which can be associated with the emotional regulation related to guilt (see eg. Khan & Dhar, 2006; Merritt, Effron & Monin, 2010).

Respondent H5 also experienced the benefit of her travels to others. H5 shared that she often incorporated philanthropy to her travels:

> I tried to be helpful with my knowledge of what I could share .. but I have tried .. by no means is it repentance of conscience but rather it has been a part of me so I have always wanted to help and see these third world matters .. not third world .. I have wanted to see matters in developing countries as very important and they are part of my long-haul travels especially .. a holiday in the Canary Islands is a whole different thing and there I am not sacrificing anything (H5)

Especially during her long-haul travels, H5 experienced a strong need to be of service. She wants to provide her support and knowledge to the local communities and considers the local matters as very important to her. She does not consider her actions as *repentance of conscience* but rather as an indication of who she is as a person. She feels that she does not experience shame because she would actively try to make up for her actions, but she does not experience shame because she simply knows that she is doing the right thing. A question about the influence of political views or personal values to her feelings of guilt and shame prompted a response: "I don't see that I feel shame because when I go for example .. or I have been .. go to Asia and other places so I do a lot of good" (H5). She feels that she doesn't feel shame because there is nothing shameful about doing good.

The respondent H4 shared that there are travel destinations that she would not visit because of the conflict in the destination's and her personal values. She also admitted that she had visited some destinations that had a history of "something that's hard for me to accept" (H4). She explained that she follows the political situation of her future travel destinations and does research on matters. H4 also perceived that her actions could be

meaningful and by gaining insight, she could be of benefit. Similar to respondent H5, she also experienced the mandate of do-good:

> Yes the fact that I have seen a lot -- .. and there are a lot of countries that I want to visit again and somehow take my money there and support those locals .. so it works both ways .. so what you see also confirms whether or not I go again (H4)

The response in the extract was prompted from the question whether she felt she would travel again to a destination that she was aware of having issues that didn't match her values. She wants to provide support by visiting certain destinations and directing her financial resources to those local communities.

4.3.2 Temporality and easiness

The experiences of the interviewees illustrate that the phrase *time is money* rings true with travel as well. Travelling is perceived as a time-bound phenomenon, which allows for only certain kinds of possibilities. Similarly, these possibilities are seen as limited. Flying is considered the fastest and easiest way to reach *the state of travel*. The descriptions of the interviewees showcase that the idea of travel is strongly built-in relation to the destination. Travel only begins at the destination: ".. when you have more time and when you have money so you can use it to go on a trip .. to the destination" (H2). Thus, in order to travel, you need to arrive at the destination within a limited amount of time. Generally, the environmentally-friendly possibilities or list of alternatives for doing so is not considered to be time-sensitive enough to make up for the idea of what travel should be like. It is this dilemma that results in the feelings of guilt for the interviewees when they attempt at opting for ideal travel.

In the interviews, out of the environmental factors, flying was noted as the most prevalent trigger of shame and guilt. At the same time, flying provides the kind of convenience in travel that is difficult to obtain through any other means of transport. In travel, flying provides the kind of speed and ease that is appreciated in cultures that feast on hustle and bustle. H2 also considers flying the fastest alternative in travel: "The general opinion is that flying is not a good thing but I do fly nonetheless because often it's the fastest and generally it .. so you can get moving so that's the only sensible option" (H2).

H2 recognizes that flying is not socially acceptable, but justifies her own flying on the grounds that it is the fastest option. In travel, speed is a value, at least in getting to the "space" of travel. She also considers flying to be *the only sensible option*, suggesting that reaching the destination as soon as possible is relevant to her. The extract also illustrates the experience of the phenomenon of flight-shame. While flying has long been considered a social norm, in recent years the discussion about the legitimacy of flying has been vocal, so much so that the positive message may have a counter impact. Negative appeals can be more likely to provoke defensiveness and inaction rather than an active positive response (Binney & Brennan, 2010).

Additionally, H2 reflects on her principles and values in relation to her preferred travel transportation choice:

> -- how .. how much can I support this principle of mine that I would like to travel by land or would like not to fly .. but because the amount of money, the amount of time .. so kind of .. I also consider it financially .. in my personal finances the time it takes me. Yeah .. how much more that time is .. considering if I would fly to Central Europe in a couple of hours (H2)

H2 questions the cost of sacrificing her principles of not flying. For her, that cost solidifies in the form of both lost time and money. H2 considers that her travel is constrained by these two elements that leave her limited choice. Convenience is also addressed here as a denominator that dictates how travel is performed. It allows the freedom strongly associated with travel, but also puts a strain on values. H2 continued on the topic of time constraint in sharing about her future travel plans where she has decided to utilize the by-land transportation option:

> For example, for next summer I have planned a trip so that it would be done completely without flying so -- so we are going on a trip next summer with this bus-train combination. It has this factor that we have the time and the destination is such that we are able to do it easily without flying (H2)

She feels like the option of by-land transportation is made possible by them having the time to travel and the perceived ease to get to the destination. H2 wants to be able to choose the option of land transportation but as the extracts illustrate, she experiences a

constraint that is out of her hands if she wishes to travel to certain destinations. Also respondent H8 experiences a similar struggle with limited to no choice:

> .. it's this again that I wouldn't have the time to take any slower means of transportation because .. or from there, however, I would have to return to write my dissertation and do other duties here .. so in that case too I was thinking that I should be there at least two to four weeks .. -- so if I go that far I should kind of make the most out of it (H8)

H8 shared about her plans to enrol on a university course for which she would have to travel abroad. H8 feels like she does not have the choice of choosing a slower means of transportation as she would be left with less time at the destination. She would also have to consider other duties that she should be able to do within the limited time reserved for her time-off. She considers that since she travels *that far,* she *should make the most out of it*. If she were to fly, then at least she should try to stay at the destination for a longer period of time. The time spent at the destination was also discussed by interviewees H2 and H4:

> -- for how long you are able to spend at the destination affects whether it's pointless to fly or not (H2)

> -- then you will have more time left at the destination so otherwise all the time would be spent on getting there .. the fact that you get there quickly (H4)

If you are in a hurry to get to travel, to get on your vacation, and the time resources available are limited, then it makes more sense to choose the fastest and easiest travel option, and that is flying. This again illustrates one of the greatest oxymorons of our time: being in a hurry in order to get to relax. Many respondents also felt that a longer stay in the destination country would be a more responsible, less guilt-inducing solution:

> -- my wish would be for me to be able to travel sensibly, that is, for example, less frequently but longer at a time .. but then there are again those realities of life which make it so that they are more often short and then when .. more often and shorter .. (H3)

> -- before I sure travelled more and for shorter trips .. I have reduced the proportion of my travels in the sense that now the trips are longer or I will be in the destination country for longer (H4)
>
> -- will I be at the destination long enough so that it would kind of justify my flying (H2)

H3, H4 and H2 experience that one long period of travel excludes an option for several shorter trips. Thus, this decision is clearly considered to potentially reduce the amount of air travel. Where this assumption stems from is left unclear. Relying on an assumption that the respondents refer to leisurely travel, the suggested interpretation is that a longer period of travel, i.e. longer period of leisure, is considered enough to satisfy travel and relaxation needs.

In addition to the perceived benefit of the time aspect associated with air travel, flying is also considered an easier option, as experienced by H1:

> Well yeah you probably could go to Europe by train and not always take that 2-hour flight that costs some fifty euros and it feels like it's really easy to .. kind of just use .. and perhaps the shame stems from the fact that I do a lot of things the easy way and not necessarily what would be more factually better (H1)

H1 experienced that she made a lot of her travel choices based on ease and not *what would be more factually better*. It could be interpreted here that those better choices based on facts are more sustainable and responsible for the perspective of the environment. She recognized that spending fifty euros on a flight feels like an easy consumption decision. H5 also experienced the ease and efficiency of flying and reflected on it in her interview:

> I don't bother to move from one place to another terribly uncomfortably due to my basic illness, so I like to fly fast and change places as efficiently as possible .. this idea of efficiency then causes the feeling of guilt since not everyone understands that it is not so easy anymore (H5)

H5 decidedly opts for air travel as she considers it the more efficient alternative of transportation due to her basic illness. She recognized that the idea of efficiency results

in the feeling of guilt for her, because she is unsure if others understand why she prefers it. She considers that her illness necessitates the speed and efficiency of her travels.

More than half of the respondents felt that time and ease constraints were an integral part of their travel experience and through these perceived constraints, the feelings of guilt and shame, especially in relation to climate issues, were attempted to be resisted. Flying was generally considered unacceptable but also so deeply integrated into the respondents' lifestyle that it was considered difficult to fully abandon. This is in line with Gössling, Hanna, Higham, Cohen and Hopkins (2019, p. 4) who note that flying is often presented as a social norm. The scholars remark that social norms are moreover reinforced through advertisement, in which the appeal is built on the motivations for travel such as "shopping, relaxation, or experiences; and within space-time constraints regarding the destinations offered, the length-of-stay suggested, or the timing of the flight during the year" (Gössling et al. 2019, p. 4).

On a general level, Higham, Cohen and Cavaliere (2014) would refer to the experiences shared by the interviewees as the *flyers' dilemma*. Flyers' dilemma can be described as "the tension that now exists between the personal benefits of tourism and the climate concerns associated with high levels of personal aeromobility" (Higham et al., 2014). The study conducted by the scholars found that factors such as convenience, efficiency (time) and cost competitiveness were regularly identified as the key incentives of behaviour, allowing climate concerns to be suppressed or disregarded entirely in consumer decision making. (Higham et al., 2014.) Thus discovering the theme of time and ease constraint also from this research's data is no wonder.

4.3.3 Self-detachment, accountability and putting matters into perspective

In addition to the resistance exhibited towards shame and guilt through convenience factors, a perspective of accountability was regularly brought up in the interviews. The respondents reflected on their personal accountability in relation to their (shameful) travel behaviour and used several different tactics in attempting to eliminate the feelings of guilt and shame. One of these tactics used was that of self-detachment. The respondents reflected on their own travel behaviour and pursued to distinguish and differentiate their own behaviour from that of others. H2 differentiated her own travel behaviour from others through her destination choices:

> I have never been the kind of person who needs to travel to Thailand every year so in that sense I get this kind of remission of my sins (H2)

H2 noted that she has never been the kind of person who needs to travel to Thailand every year, implying that she has not been the kind of person who has the need to travel far and thus have the burden of bigger flight emissions every year. She admits that this conception facilitates her in tolerating or dealing with her feelings of guilt and shame: "I get this kind of remission of my sins" (H2). H2 recognizes the socially unacceptable travel choices that she makes but also attempts at validating her actions by looking for justification from the (even poorer) decisions and actions of others. She reflects more generally the act of flying in a similar manner: "As harsh as it is .. flying will not stop .. so even though I do not fly the others will" (H2).

The respondent uses the behaviour of others to justify her own choices: if others are doing it, why should it be shameless for me to do it? By several standards, mobility is considered a right, not a privilege. Flying is still very much regarded as a social norm towards which the attitudes and behaviour will not change in the blink of an eye. The strong status of flying as a social norm is also reflected in the experience of the respondent H8:

> -- or yes of course I knew that air travel is not good but maybe somehow I didn't actually do anything about it or maybe .. maybe somehow I wasn't able to think about it so critically (H8)

She admitted to knowing that *air travel is not good* but also experienced that she wasn't able to consider it so critically. She recognized her accountability in admitting that she was not able to think about air travel *so critically* but also in a way detaches herself from her behaviour with the perceived idea of lack of better knowledge. Similarly to H8, the respondent H1 felt that lack of knowledge, or more like the lack of accessible information, was one of the factors in holding her back from making responsible travel decisions:

> .. yes you can find these all sorts of studies if you .. first of all if you know how to search and -- you know how to read that data but the fact is that few of us are environmental scientists so it's usually either condemning in a way that you are ruining the world this fast or it's like .. something in between .. (H1)

The respondent felt that there is not enough easy information available to make an informed and responsible choice in travel. She expressed that this lack of easily consumable information that is accessible to others as well as *environmental scientists*, is one of the factors that she feels is affecting her consumption decisions. H1 also expressed her concern or annoyance over the fact that the current information available about ecological aspects related to travel is currently condemning by nature. It could be interpreted that this condemnation, or shaming, is considered as moralisation and causes the feeling of disconnection.

A disconnection of other sorts was experienced by respondent H8. She was asked at which part of her travels does she experience shame or guilt the most. Her response illustrates the mentality of "what is done, is done":

> Well not at least after the trip because at that point .. in a way those choices have already been made and all possible flights have been taken and other poor choices have already been made .. so at that point it may be pointless (H8)

She experienced that after the poor choices have already been made, there is no point in feeling guilt or shame. Once the decision is made, one needs to own up to that decision. The perceived pleasantness gained from the travel can be interpreted to certainly weigh in the scale when the respondent reflects on this experience. The mentality of "what is done, is done" was also experienced by H2:

> .. most of my trips have been made by flying and there are probably forty-five countries so far so .. you can't undo that, but from time to time it can be a little embarrassing if someone happens to ask that .. you travelled so much so how many countries have you visited? (H2)

H2 experienced that the "damage" of flying was something that could no longer be *undone* but she admitted to being ashamed for having to admit the vastness of the impact of her travels. The idea of not having the ability to change the past does not seem to bother the respondent too terribly in its own right but she does experience the consequence of her actions through the potential threat of social condemnation.

H4 reflected on her accountability in making travel choices by voicing that individuals have their role and responsibility in making informed travel decisions:

> .. however(,) you can't save the whole world .. you can do your part .. so somehow I think there is certain .. I have not taken that road that I would not have the right to travel .. so that I would just stay here and all that .. I would not have experienced and seen a lot of things in life .. to some extent I justify my traveling when it is done as ethically and well as possible in each moment .. (H4)

The respondent experienced that she can do her part, which she refers to as making ethical and overall good travel consumption choices. From the extract it could be interpreted that the respondent also experiences that individuals are tied to specific choices and that any larger scale change in the social permissibility landscape is more of a societal responsibility. For some respondents, the dilemma on choices was also reflected on other people: "why is that other person such a better person when they're making choices like that" (H8). H8 discussed the shame she felt when she compared her own travel behaviour to that of her friends. She experienced a sense of being "less good" for utilising air travel when faced with the choices her friends had made.

H3 showcased the dilemma of wanting to go on a trip and the accountability she experienced in relation to that:

> .. even if it was financially and timewise possible for me to go somewhere for two nights on the weekend .. it would be insanely nice .. but I won't go .. so apparently I do make some choices so that I have those important things left .. or those .. how would I put it .. try to minimize the bad while it's still quite big (H3)

She expressed that *it would be insanely nice* to go on a weekend trip but she won't do it because she feels a sense of responsibility. She makes the choice to not go in order to *try to minimize the bad while it's still quite big*, thus she recognizes the overall poor state of matter but tries to do her part in not making it too much worse. H8 reflected on her accountability through gaining more knowledge on different alternatives available:

> .. find out about .. or kind of find out the facts and what's the impact of these matters and what options I have and what is like .. or kind of the pros and cons for

> what is now the best solution and .. or of course always the solution made is not the best solution in all respects (H8)

While H8 experienced her accountability through gaining knowledge she recognized that *always the solution made is not the best solution in all respects*, suggesting an existing conflict between what is generally considered responsible and what is important on an individual level. H8's cogitation also reflects the understanding of perspective. Putting matters into perspective was another tactic used when the respondents reflected their own accountability:

> It kind of annoys me a little that .. nowadays air travel has been put on a pedestal as the bad guy so it's really out there and there are probably some other .. other things in this world that we do that are not so good (H2)

> I examine where they (feelings of guilt and shame) come from and whether there is always a cause for them .. one can also question one's own feelings and thoughts that whether they are all that .. should this .. should this result in this feeling .. (H4)

While H2 and H4 present two very different points of views on accountability, annoyance and reflection of emotions, they share the attitude of placing their behaviour in the context of the grand scheme of things. H2 experiences annoyance over the matter that flying has been stigmatized as the only reprehensible means of travel. She feels that there are other things in the world that are worth the attention air travel currently receives in the public discussion. It can be interpreted that the reason for annoyance stems from her own awareness in engaging in an act that is considered so reprehensible. In turn, H4 reflects whether sometimes her feelings of guilt and shame are valid at all, *whether there is always a cause for them*. She wondered whether a certain travel-related act should provoke feelings of guilt and shame and reflected that on the idea of justification. It could be suggested that H4 attempted to find justification in the avoidance of her feelings of guilt and shame.

H8 vocalised her experience on her accountability by placing her travel intentions in the perspective of travel duration:

> Perhaps also if you go somewhere for a longer period of time so for like for several months then maybe in that way the intention justifies the means in a way .. if you spend for example four months in Canada versus that if you were there for even a week .. on the other hand it is also funny because it is not one .. or the burden on the climate is the same but in a way you yourself gets more response to that burden .. (H8)

Overlapping clearly with the theme of *Temporality and easiness*, the extract illustrates how the respondent reflected that a longer period of time spent at the destination would result in more *response* or reward to her. Here she places her intention into perspective, comparing long and short period stays at the destination. The time at the destination is used as a justification, where the use of air travel is referenced through the phrase *the intention justifies the means*.

The tactics of resistance exhibited in this and the two previous sections can also be referred to as techniques of *neutralisation*. According to Sykes and Matza (1957), acts that violate social norms or go against beliefs can carry with them guilt and shame, which often results in the abandonment of that action. Thus, in order to proceed with the act, neutralize the guilt and protect their self-image, individuals can bring into use different techniques of neutralization. The scholars described five neutralization techniques: denial of responsibility, denial of injury, denial of victims, appeal to higher loyalties, and condemnation of condemners. (Sykes & Matza, 1957, p. 667-670.) While the context of this research differs quite significantly from that of Sykes and Matza's article, at least two of the techniques can be recognized also in this research data: denial of responsibility and condemning the condemners.

McDonald, Oates, Thyne, Timmis and Carlile (2015) studied the attitudes and behaviours of self-selected green consumers against flying and set them within a cognitive dissonance analytical framework. The scholars uncovered four strategies: "not changing travel behaviour (but offering justifications related to travel product, travel context or personal identity); reducing or restricting flights; changing other behaviours to compensate for flying; and stopping flying" (McDonald et al., 2015). The framework of cognitive dissonance, articulated by Harmon-Jones and Mills (2019, p. 3) postulates that "the existence of dissonance, being psychologically uncomfortable, motivates the person to reduce the dissonance and leads to avoidance of information likely to increase the

dissonance. The greater the magnitude of the dissonance, the greater is the pressure to reduce dissonance.”.

4.4 Threat of guilt and shame

The last emergent theme *Threat of guilt and shame* aims at illustrating how do the feelings of guilt and shame pose a threat to the perceived qualities of travel consumption experience. The theme complements the interviewees' experiences of travel-related guilt and shame by providing a perspective on what kind of tourism experience is expected and desired and what kind of positive experiences and feelings can shame and guilt bring about. The first subordinate theme, *Ideal state of travel*, aims to build an image of the perception of what travel should be like. I find this theme essential for the research, as it showcases what feelings of guilt and shame may collide with and what they are “up against” when it comes to tourism. The second subordinate theme, *Benefit to self*, illustrates the experiences of perceived benefit to self-arising from travel.

4.4.1 Ideal state of travel

> It would also be somehow sad if you decided to leave and then throughout that trip you would have such a shitty feeling about being there .. (H3)

The above quote by respondent H3 embodies perfectly the perceived idea of what travel should be like. The respondent describes the situation in which one would have to feel *shitty* on a trip as *sad*. This illustrates the underlying idea that a trip, travel, should include primarily positive emotions. Thus, the interviewees' experiences of their own travel-related feelings of guilt and shame also emphasized the experiences of the ideal state of travel. A similar experience is shared by respondents H7 and H8:

> .. well at the moment I don’t perhaps use time at the destination in .. emotional rumination of guilt and shame .. well I can’t tell if I travel less because of these feelings but it perhaps has to do with something else then (H7)

> -- on the other hand maybe one would hope to have the biggest feelings of shame and guilt before the trip because then if you start to ruminate on them unnecessarily during the trip then it also affects the atmosphere of that trip or how you feel about it .. (H8)

Both respondents use the word *ruminate* to illustrate the overall negative emotional aspect of feelings of guilt and shame. While on a trip, you should not be burdened by these emotions. H8 further hoped that she would experience the most intense feelings of guilt and shame before her travels, suggesting that at that point in time, she still has the control over the choices to be made. Consecutively, choices made should not be then ruminated on and one should enjoy the experience of travel. The overall intent of travel was described through, among other things, experientialism:

> I won't go on a trip and while hiking up a mountain think that I'm a terrible person now that I've flown here (H1)

The extract from respondent H1's interview reveals that the payoff of travel experience is enough to push negative emotions such as guilt and shame aside and immerse oneself with the travel experience. While one is actively engaging with travel, the threat of guilt and shame is not as evident. The extracts from H2 and H8 further illustrate the yearning of experimentalism that can only be obtained through specific kinds of travel:

> .. okay I can see in a photo that hey there's the Eiffel tower and there is a castle and there is a palace or something but it is more than those entities .. there are the people .. there are all the smells .. the tastes .. the being a silly tourist when you are trying to find your way from one place to another .. and again you're being the silly tourist because you don't get it .. it has a lot of this .. other than just seeing a specific building or a specific waterfall and so on .. (H2)

> Although the journey itself is part of the travel but you can't go to see musicals or go to a museum during that train ride or .. then it (travel) should be designed somehow differently .. or you should plan some kind of a round trip or some more nearby destination or something to get some kind of response to that trip (H8)

Respondent H2 experienced that travel is more to her than just mechanically visiting specific places. She describes how different senses and people are involved in constituting the overall travel experience. This kind of experience cannot be achieved through looking at photos of travel destinations. In turn, H8 expressed that while she considers the journey

as part of travel, choosing e.g. land transportation, she then has to opt out of certain experiences. She does acknowledge that these choices will then change the course of the travel experience and further planning is required in order to get the similar reward from travel. H8 further described her latest travel experience: ".. we decided to take the most out of it and then we also thought that .. or we had also prepared a good budget -- we wanted this sort of full travel experience .." (H8).

While many of the respondents highlighted the experimental aspects of travel, they also recognized that the travel is not "mandatory" for them. This discrepancy between the expectation of the positive experience and the non-obligation to travel causes respondents to feel guilt and shame:

> -- unnecessary consumption is .. goes in the same category as .. OK this (travel) is not like the mandatory condition to sustain my life (H1)

> -- and also it's just like I said it's completely unnecessary .. basically I am able to live my life without ever going anywhere .. (H2)

> So that what you said about justifying the trip .. it sounds awful to say that my own well-being because I would certainly be able to be without it (travel) .. (H3)

Both respondents H1 and H2 referred to travel as *unnecessary* indicating that they perceive travel as a mainly leisurely activity that is not something that they *must* exercise. While also remarking that she would be able to live without travelling, respondent H3 was hesitant to use the word justify I had used in the interview before. She feels as if embarrassed to admit that she experiences the positive impact of travel through increased well-being. Consistent with Dedeoğlu and Kazançoğlu's (2012, p. 11) findings, the respondents can be considered to be exhibiting heightened feelings of guilt as a result from hedonic consumption of indulgences. Unlike the other three respondents who expressed their experience primarily from an individual standpoint, H6 reflected on and challenged the topic of mandatory travel from a broader, societal perspective:

> I think a substantial social norm exists in countries like Finland that you have to go on holiday and of course when you are on holiday you have to go somewhere and maybe .. you then consider whether travel is considered such a basic need

> because I think it is truly normalized nowadays or I wonder if it is a luxury that we really should not be able to afford .. (H6)

The respondent H6 is able to vocalise the similar conception with H1 and H2 that while the idea of travel and holiday is completely normalized in primarily Western societies, it is not necessarily a right or a mandate that exists just because. H6 wondered whether travel *is a luxury that we really should not be able to afford,* referring to travel both as such a basic everyday conception yet as a privilege reserved only for some.

The theme of *Ideal state of travel* depicts the very strong leisurely nature of travel. Travel is the time reserved for enjoyment during which ruminating on negative emotions such as guilt or shame is perceived as unwanted and unnecessary. This is confirmed with the account of several respondents who shared that they experienced the most amount of guilt and shame either before or after their travels. While the leisurely nature of travel is generally recognized and the interviewees' accounts do not add anything substantial to that pool of knowledge, they demonstrate also the scale of matters which guilt and shame operate in.

4.4.2 Benefit to self

In addition to the highlighted leisurely and positive nature of travel, several of the respondents vocalised the beneficial impact of travel towards themselves. The subordinate theme of *Benefit to self* illustrates these experiences shared by the interviewees. The section also reveals how do the respondents consider the feelings of shame and guilt on a more general level and how do they perceive the impact of those emotions towards themselves. The most emergent benefit of travel to self was well-being. Well-being was primarily experienced as a direct derivative of travel:

> -- so probably I do then justify such thinking that in relation to my personal well-being .. that I will feel better if I go somewhere .. (H7)

> -- if I feel it is important for my well-being in the middle of winter to get in the heat and sun for even a little while then I will do it .. (H3)

H7 experienced that she did most likely justify her travelling as a mechanism to her increased well-being. In her account however, she was not as definite as respondent H3 who stated that travelling was rather an imperative that needed to be done if she felt it was necessary for her well-being. The extract from H3's interview illustrates that the respondent strongly associates the act of travelling to increased contentment. She is likely to have previous experience from such a cause-and-effect relationship and thus considers travelling as a very important facilitator in bettering wellness. H3 also reflected more on this matter of wellness and values in her interview:

> .. you could think that if I wrote down my values on a piece of paper then they could somehow be contradictory .. but then again if the value is .. somehow selfishly .. well-being .. then again travelling could be in accordance with that .. that if it's hard to let go of work-related matters and especially from everyday hardships at home or even in motherland then again the fact that you can travel and it generates a good feeling that lasts a long time .. (H3)

In the extract, H3 illustrates her experience on the interconnection of travelling and well-being. She does not place them as contradictory values as such but rather as interconnected matters that could generate behaviour that is in line with one's values. Without referring to any specific qualities of travel, the respondent experienced that travel could be used as a mechanism to generate *a good feeling that lasts a long time*.

Similar to H3, the respondent H4 recognized a contradiction in her thinking, but also experienced the positive impact of travel:

> .. so it's kind of like such a contradiction in my thinking at the moment and then I somehow justify myself .. so it will go into that it's been a tough year and stuff .. that it's my right .. so I do recognize my thinking patterns and look for confirmation that I have the right .. (H4)

For her, travelling is used as a means to get through a tough year. It could be interpreted that travel is considered a prize or allowance of sorts. It could be considered that the respondent H4's pattern of thought illustrates the phenomenon of vocalised cognitive dissonance. An unpleasant feeling, in this case shame or guilt, arises when previous beliefs conflict with new knowledge. This sensation is here described as the recognized

contradiction by respondent H4, who has the previous assumption about travel as a leisurely activity and the new knowledge about the negative impacts of travelling.

The interviewees were asked that if they were to describe the feelings of shame and guilt, would they rate them positive, negative or somewhere in-between. All of the respondents recognized both the negative and positive aspects of these self-conscious emotions. Feeling of guilt and shame were considered mainly negative emotions as such, but it was also recognized that they too had a constructive power in them:

> .. the fact that that feeling of shame increases isn't a bother in its own right because it makes people think about it .. in the future I'll perhaps be a more aware tourism consumer .. (H2)

H2 experienced that the negative feelings of guilt and shame she might encounter are not a bother itself as they can have the power to facilitate critical thinking. She also considered that these feelings could have the impact of shaping her into a more aware consumer. What she refers to here as *thinking about it*, could suggest a reference to thinking about the different choices people make. H8 experienced that the feelings of guilt and shame could be considered positive if they resulted in change:

> -- if they (feelings) have successful consequences .. but in principle .. or if you think about them as pure feelings out of context then (they) are negative .. (H8)

It is not entirely clear what the respondent H8 here refers to as successful consequences but from the context of the interview it could be interpreted that these consequences could be more responsible or sustainable choices that would decrease the intensity of the feelings of guilt and shame. In turn, respondent H7 provided for a more concrete implication of her guilty feelings:

> .. so they're not like crushing or destructive feelings and they make you strong .. strong then .. that is if you consider that at some point in relation to them (feelings of guilt and shame) I started thinking about for example .. I started to reduce water consumption in the shower so .. that way I managed to .. I managed to use them for good .. (H7)

H7 provided an example of having started to reduce water consumption in the shower as a tangible result of the self-conscious emotions. She expressed that the feelings of guilt and shame she experienced were not crushing or destructive but rather constructive in the sense that she was able to reflect on them and engage in reparative behaviour of sorts. The kind of reparative behaviour as expressed here can be linked to guilt in particular as it does not include the social context shame often requires. While the research data would suggest that guilt is a weak force of change, it can operate as a push to making more responsible choices. However, those choices have to be easy enough that an individual is willing to let go of the potential loss they will experience. On a larger scale, the lack of potential options that are appealing enough, would seem to limit or at least hinder change and action.

5 DISCUSSION

> I don't seem to experience enough guilt not to leave (H4)

The above citation is the perfect illustration of one of the core findings of this study. Based on the analysis of experiences shared in their confessionals by eight different women, feelings of guilt and shame can be considered as weak forces of immediate behavioural change in the travel context. The accounts of the interviews provide a complex picture of the relationship between the self-conscious emotions of guilt and shame and the tourism context. Guilt and shame in the tourism context are mosaic emotions provoking conflicting thoughts and feelings for the interviewees. The findings also illustrate an on-the-surface contradiction between the values as well as triggers of guilt and shame shared and consequent behaviour. As already mentioned, the findings of this particular study illustrate that both guilt and shame are weak forces of change, particularly in the tourism context. However, that is not to say that the emotions would not impact behaviour at all. The emotions may have the constructive capability to facilitate a change in thinking but the actual behaviour that follows has to result in the individual experiencing a reward significant enough to undergo the change. Oftentimes if the reward is not considered to be compelling enough, a range of different resistance techniques is used to justify the lack of change in behaviour. The findings of this study also illustrate that even causes that were considered as important values, were able to be disregarded or pushed aside with the use of these resistance techniques.

The objective of this study was to uncover how guilt and shame shape the experience of travel consumption of female travellers. In this study, travel consumption context is referred to as the overall temporal space stretching across from the beginning of the travel until after. Based on the interviews of this study, it is difficult to provide a strict time-bound definition for when the travel consumption experience starts and when it ends - for how long before the travel can one be considered to be engaging in travel consumption? However, in this study, the travel consumption experience is considered to start when the individual starts planning their travels. Several of the respondents reported that they experienced the most amount of guilt and shame either before or after their travels. From the perspective of experiences of guilt and shame, the planning phase of travels in particular was proven to be significant when reflecting on the future decisions to be made. Next I will answer all four of my research questions in order to better illuminate how the guilt and shame are being constructed in the confessionals.

RQ1: What are the triggers of travel-related shame and guilt for female travellers?

The structure of the semi-structured interview aimed at covering and thus revealing the experiences and triggers of guilt and shame from the perspectives of economic, social, political, cultural and environmental impact. As postulated, one of the major triggers of guilt and shame was the impact of tourism on environmental aspects such as climate change. This trigger in particular was one that produced significant dissonance for the respondents. Another prominent trigger that emerged from the data was humanitarian issues and the idea of potential exploitation and privilege that was affiliated with it. This trigger was associated in particular with economic and value-related factors. In turn, the impact of cultural context was experienced as very minor and the respondents even found it difficult to extensively reflect on. Through the strong dissonance of beliefs and action experienced by the respondents by both environmental and humanitarian impact in particular, these aspects received the most resistance.

In this study, the triggers of guilt and shame were extensively experienced in relation to different social contexts. Although the respondents often used the terms guilt and shame interchangeably, the strong emergence of social context suggests a stronger emphasis on the experiences of shame. Above all else, the respondents reflected on their own social position: how they are perceived by others and how they make others feel. These reflections were directly associated with the feeling of shame. As is noted by Lindsay-

Hartz (1984), the experiences of shame often relate to being flawed, exposed, worthless, powerless or judged. It can thus be considered no wonder that these experiences were manifested in the *confessionals*. Because the triggers of shame and guilt appeared in the confessionals as extremely multi-levelled and experientially rich, I do not feel it appropriate or even functional to separate each trigger arising in the confessionals for this study. In addition to travel-related human rights and environmental issues, some other triggers recognized in this study were: financial prioritisation of travel, social responsibility, perceived obligation, breaking the norms and experience of irresponsibility. The reflections of the following research questions seek to build an understanding of the multi-levelled phenomenon that is the experiences of shame and guilt associated with tourism.

Although the thematic focus of the presentation of core findings did not include accounts of gendered guilt or shame, I want to allow a reflection of gender in the discussion part of this study. The clearly gendered accounts of guilt and shame were not evident in the data in the sense that it was impossible to e.g. determine whether the feelings of guilt and shame experienced by women were indications of more or less shame or guilt-proneness, as is referenced by Malinen (2010). A comparative set of data would be needed in order to demonstrate this. However, my interpretation is that there are elements in travel that are gendered and associated with guilt and shame. Examples of this were the experiences that were referenced to safety as a female traveller. Respondent H5 reflected comprehensively on her experiences as a female travelling solo. In certain destinations she experienced shame for travelling alone as a female as she felt that that was not the custom or cultural standard in those destinations. In turn, respondent H8 justified her travelling by certain means of transport with the experience of threatened safety: *.. but by land (the journey) there is .. well of course so much slower .. maybe also relatively more dangerous* (H8). A sense of security was one of the factors in resisting shame and guilt. Respondent H7 experienced shame because she felt that she was perceived as *sensitive*, a target of potential scam or deceit. Overall, all of the eight women reflected more of their experiences of shame than guilt. The accounts are all heavily influenced by their social contexts and how the respondents situate themselves between others and their sense of shame.

RQ2: How is shame and guilt being constructed in the confessionals?

Although one of the main objectives of this study was to determine what were the single triggers that caused the respondents to experience feelings of shame and guilt in the context of tourism, it became clear from the very beginning of the analysis phase that the greatest contribution from the interviews could not be found in individual topic mentions. Both guilt and shame are triggered by the experience of seeming wrong-doing, whether it's under the eyes of others or in solitude. So where does the experience of wrong-doing actually originates from based on the confessionals of the interviewees? The premise of the interviews was the experience of guilt and/or shame in the tourism context. All of the interviewees admitted to experiencing guilt and shame to varying degrees. As mentioned, one of the major triggers for the self-conscious emotions was the acknowledged impact tourism has on environmental issues such as climate change. The other relevant resulting impact recognized was that of threat to human rights and the potential exploitative implications of travel. The emerging feelings of guilt and shame illustrate that the respondents consider these impacts as an important consideration. According to a definition by Low and Davenport (2007) the respondents could also be referred to as *ethical consumers* since they have concerns in at least one of the following areas: human welfare, animal welfare or environmental welfare. Many of the interviews referred to environmental and humanitarian values as important to them, yet their travel-related behaviour seemed to illustrate a rather contradictory view.

While it's difficult to determine what can be considered as contradicting behaviour towards experienced values, my interpretation is that these discrepancies do exist also in the confessionals. While e.g. the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), postulates that attitudes affect behaviour, i.e. certain attitudes result in certain behaviour, that seems not to be the case in this research. Generally, it could be considered that air travel contradicts with the value of the environment so one could conclude that engaging in such means of travel would create a conflict between values and action. This specific example was one of the most relevant discrepancies also noted in this study. This contradiction of experienced values and the behaviour that does not follow the values could be referred to as *the value-action gap* or *attitude-behaviour gap*.

Several studies have identified possible reasons for this gap, such as claiming that there are no options to current behaviours (Becken, 2007), using the desire to escape and relax as a justification to disregard environmental considerations (Wearing, Cynn, Ponting & McDonald, 2002), blaming others (Lorenzoni, Nicholson-Cole & Whitmarsh, 2007) or

behaving in an environmentally friendly way at home (Becken, 2007). Although these findings may illustrate a reason for the value-action gap, in the light of the present study's findings, they can also be considered as techniques of resistance for guilt and shame. A simplified approach would be to consider the value-action gap as a result from habitual behaviour. While the habitual travel behaviour might not any longer be considered permissible from a wider social standpoint, it can be considered difficult for an individual to change the course of that learnt behaviour.

The emergence of the value-action gap in this study also portrays an interesting opportunity for interpretation. Based on the analysis of the empirical data of this study, some values could be considered internalised values, making them more difficult to circumvent through resistance and find solid legitimacy for them. Other values have been learnt through external social conditioning, so it is relatively easier for an individual to find more reasons to justify travelling.

A substantive theme that emerged from the confessionals was the idea of permissibility. The theme of permissibility aims at illustrating how the respondents situate themselves to what they perceive to be allowed or prohibited in a travel consumption context. The perception of permissibility is relevant from the perspective of shame in particular because it depicts the experiences of seeming wrong-doing in the eyes of others. Guilt and shame emerge when the reflected behaviour is compared to social norms and standards (de Hooge et al., 2001, p. 198). The withdrawal behaviour, staying quiet about one's travels, would indicate a magnitude of social pressure currently arising in travel contexts. Certain types of travel, such as air travel, are publicly condemned as irresponsible and in order to tolerate the shame resulting from engaging in such reprehensible action, the respondents resolve to silence. A large proportion of descriptions of unauthorised travel contradict how interviewees describe the experience of travel in their own interviews. Travel is described primarily through pleasure and experimentalism. This contradiction is bound to give rise to experiences of guilt.

If we consider the temporality of travel consumption experience, the theme of permissibility relates to all points in time: the before, during and after the travels. The experience of social withdrawal can be seen to occur both before and after the travels: when the individuals were planning their trips and once they had returned from their

travels. Guilty feelings also arose during the travels when the respondents experienced e.g. obligation to people close to them.

Through the theme of social withdrawal, and silence in particular, shame is being constructed in the confessionals through the imagined or actual presence of others. The experiences of withdrawal depict a perceived threat to both outer and inner self: how others see me and how I feel about myself if I share this. The respondents consider themselves as the casualties of potential shaming and judgement and thus choose to retreat. Gruenewald et al. (2007) consider that despite the fact that the experience of shame can be considered private and individual, shame is a social reaction that signals threat to the social self. The experiences of guilt and shame would also seem to give rise to the idea of dichotomized travel: authorised and unauthorised travel. The emergence of these feelings indicates to the respondents that they are engaging in travel behaviour or elements of travel that are either generally condemned by social standards (shame) or argue with their own world of values (guilt). The experience of travel consumption is then altered and individuals are forced to resolve using resistance techniques or completely change their behaviour.

RQ3: How are shame and guilt being resisted in the confessionals?

The resistance techniques towards the feelings of guilt and shame exhibited by the respondents can be considered as an entirely humane part of human behaviour. In this research the objective is not to condemn this human behaviour but to illustrate the different ways in which the respondents place themselves in the contradiction of permissible travel and the feelings experienced. The experiences shared by the respondents as a whole build an understanding of the complex phenomenon that feelings of shame and guilt bring about in tourism. Resistance is a natural response to the perceived idea of what travel should be like, that is, leisurely and enjoyable, as is illustrated in section 4.4. In analysing the data of this study, three types of resistance techniques or justifications were identified: *denial of perceived control* (temporality and easiness), *denial of responsibility* (accountability, self-detachment, putting matters into perspective) and *compensation through benefits to others*.

The subordinate theme of *Temporality and easiness* illustrates the perceived restrictions of time and convenience in the confessionals of the interviewees. Time and convenience

were referenced extensively when the respondents reflected on their travel-related feelings of guilt and shame. Lack of time did not allow the respondents to act as responsibly as they would have liked in the travel context. The same notation rang true with convenience, perceived ease of less-responsible travel options, as well. This subordinate theme illustrates the resistance technique of denial of perceived control.

The justification of denial responsibility can be illustrated through the accounts of self-detachment, accountability and putting matters into perspective. The primary self-detachment techniques used were detachment from others (I do not behave like others), detachment from information (I was not able to obtain enough information to make an informed choice) and detachment from past action (I am not able to change the past). The experience of accountability was illustrated in making at least small choices and appealing to the accountability of the society. In turn, the third means of denial of responsibility was putting matters into perspective. The respondents appealed to among other things to the following factors in relation to their guilt and shame: there are other matters that should be considered more, are my feelings of guilt and shame even relevant in the first place and intention justifying the means.

As the experiences shared by the respondents are to a large extent described through a social context, they can be considered to involve feelings of shame in particular. One of the interpersonal action tendencies of shame is that of withdrawal or disappearance from the judgement or evaluation of others (Barrett, 1995, p. 44). This sort of tendency was also exhibited by the respondents in the confessionals about not wanting to share about their travels, planned or completed, to others.

In turn, the approach behaviours even more often associated with shame were displayed primarily through the perceived benefit of the respondents' travel behaviour to others - *compensation through benefits to others*. The interviewees reflected on their positive impact in bringing both economic and humanitarian need to destinations that they perceived were in need of it. Previous studies have been able to demonstrate that shame is able to produce prosocial behaviours, such as donating and cooperating especially in situations where individuals are connecting with others towards whom they feel ashamed (de Hooge et al., 2008). Surprisingly, in this study, other approach behaviours that could be associated with the atonement-like activity in relation to travel shame, such as paying for emission compensations, were not considered as relevant as I would have predicted.

On the contrary, several of the respondents experienced that they did not support or believe in the act of *buying good conscience*.

Cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957) expresses that when humans have contradictory thoughts that result in internal conflict, they seek rationalisation for their thoughts or avoid information likely to increase the dissonance. The resistance techniques used by almost all respondents illustrate the proposition of the cognitive dissonance theory as true. The respondents also readily expressed the feelings of dissonance, mostly referring to it as a discrepancy in thought.

The exhibited resistance could also be considered to be in relation to letting go of obtained privilege. If certain "rights" or privileges are found to be of benefit to oneself, it is increasingly difficult to abandon them. Similarly to Becker's (2007) findings, the value of freedom to travel was a powerful default that also was integrated into this study's respondents' minds. Such was also the finding of diverting into generalised responsibility (Becker, 2007, p. 358), which was illustrated in this study in part in section 4.3.3.

The experiences of shame and guilt are constructed strongly in relation to the perceived lack of alternatives. Resistance could be considered as one of the responses to this perceived lack of choice. While feelings of guilt and shame can facilitate action, they need a pleasant enough response to make that action happen. It would appear that in travel, this pleasant enough response is seemingly hard to find. Giving up air travel seemed to be the most difficult thing in travel to let go of since land travel was not considered to be convenient enough - there was no reward of saved time or ease by choosing land travel. Air travel was considered to provide the kind of convenience in travel that associates strongly with its leisurely nature. One of the clearly most cited travel choices was to travel for a longer period of time. Some respondents also argued that while they do not make the most responsible choices in terms of tourism, at home they strived to live an everyday life where they take responsibility and environmental factors into account. Based on the amount of discomfort the respondents experienced in relation to travel choices, it could even be argued that the accounts shared by the respondents build an image of travel as an absolute value.

Whether the feelings of guilt and shame are justified through or on the basis of ethical consumerism was more difficult to identify. The respondents did refer to trying to opt for

more responsible and sustainable travel choices, but it was unclear to what extent these choices actually came into action. However, the respondents did acknowledge their own accountability in contributing to the choices made and regarded those options that were rewarding enough for them through positive mindset, as was experienced by respondent H4: ”-- they are small but still meaningful choices you can make yourself” (H4). Some of the respondents did mention the option of e.g. paying carbon emission compensations or the before mentioned ethical consumer choices made at home, but these aspects did not seem to be at the core of resistance.

RQ4: How do both the triggers and constructs of shame and guilt disrupt the order of consumption?

In short, the emergence of feelings of shame and guilt disrupt the image of what it should be like to travel - pleasant - and thus different emotional resistance tactics are used to get rid of the feelings of guilt and shame. The emergence of these resistance tactics is mainly focused on the time before the travel, i.e., the planning phase of the travel. Guilt and shame cause the mapping of alternatives and the weighing of those alternatives in relation to one's own personal perceived values. The time of emergence for these tactics would suggest that anticipatory guilt (see e.g., Dedeoğlu & Kazançoğlu, 2012) is the most frequently experienced in this study. The experiences of the interviewees of this study illustrate that even though an individual may have values that they consider as important, the attitude of belief is not always followed by according behaviour.

This dissonance was proven to be particularly strong with reference to travel. During the planning phase of travel, during which the feelings of shame and guilt are considered to be the most uncompromising, they can perceive to have the most impact on the order of consumption. As mentioned, during this stage the mapping of potential travel element alternatives is carried out and the consumer is preparing to make a choice. However, if the perceived choices are not considered rewarding enough or too laborious, consumers may resolve to the use of resistance techniques in order to get rid of the guilt and shame arising from the situation causing dissonance. Thus, despite the negative emotions, this often leads to the engagement of behaviour, travel through preferred means and including also the “reprehensible” elements.

The confessionals illustrate that the feelings of guilt and shame are not given the negative emotional grip during the actual act of travelling. That time is experienced to be reserved purely for leisure. As the experiences of some of the respondents illustrate, choices made can't be undone and thus they are considered to be out of reach of one's responsibility. On some rare occasions, occurrences during travel may evoke feelings of guilt and shame in individuals if those instances argue hard against personal values. An example of such occurrence could be the experience of being an intruder or in the role of the exploiter during the travels. After the travel, the choices made can be evaluated more critically and safely.

6 CONCLUSION

This study represents the trend of phenomenological and thus also qualitative research. Hence, the purpose of the study is not to make quantitative or generalisable observations about the research topic but rather to construct idiographic descriptions of it from the perspective of individuals' experiences. The analytical approach of interpretative phenomenological analysis was used to provide this study the guideline of analysis and means to interpret the experiences of the respondents. Based on my personal reflection, I have succeeded in describing the experiences of the feelings of guilt and shame in travel context, depict the complex nature and discrepancies of these self-conscious emotions and provide a reflective discussion that further and in more detail demonstrates the findings. Thus, I consider that I have succeeded in answering the research questions and meet the scientific objectives set for this study at the beginning of my research.

The perspective of guilt and shame in travel consumption context is a conceptually broad research topic. This proved to be both an interesting and an impossible challenge from the perspective of this particular study. The phase of analysis in particular led to the exploration of many new theoretical perspectives, which at times made it difficult to perceive both the data and the context as a whole and delineate the scope of interpretation while respecting the relevance of the experiences of the interviewees. Nonetheless, because of the lack of extensive qualitative research on specifically travel-related guilt and shame, I consider my study and its findings as a meaningful extension of conversation around this topic. While the findings of this study are in line with existing research, they hope to build further understanding of the guilt and shame -related aspects that go into play in shaping the experience of travel consumption.

The interpretability inherent in the analysis of IPA research data is one of both the strengths and weaknesses of the method. In research based on an interpretive method, interpretability moves on and between the extremes of objectivity and subjectivity. However, in my research, I aim to be able to verify my interpretation with the help of citations extracted from the empirical data. A key limitation of the current research is undoubtedly the lack of experience of the conductor of this study. Larkin et al. (2006, p. 103) argue that "IPA can be easy to do badly, and difficult to do well". Kortteinen (2005, p. 29) considers that it is near impossible to define the extent that the researcher has reached exactly the meanings that the interviewees have tried to convey. Researchers may be biased to be drawn to certain, personally relevant streams of argumentation. The ability to not to project my own interpretation too excessively to the experiences of the respondents was definitely a challenge.

From the beginning of the analysis it became clear that although the objective of the study was to provide a gendered account on the experiences of the self-conscious emotions in travel context, comparative sets of data of other genders would be needed in order to illustrate this in a meaningful and valid way. In a way, the present study does provide a gendered account of the self-conscious emotions in travel context but perhaps lacks the applicability in other contexts. The same is true with the cultural impact of guilt and shame. Due to their cultural and geographical background, the interviewees can be considered to represent a seemingly narrow point-of-view in this aspect. However, I do believe that these limitations also provide an interesting avenue for future research. The experiences of what could be considered to be a Eurocentric group of individuals provide a limited view on the phenomenon of the self-conscious emotions in travel context. Conducting a study with a different cultural perspective would certainly provide an interesting comparison to the existing data.

A critique is also in place when evaluating the sampling. While the interviewees can be considered to be a coherent group and were selected purposively, granting me an access to a particular experience, they were also a group of individuals that can be considered to have strong orientation towards travel. The interviewees were scouted through a Facebook group dedicated to the topic of travelling. Although this does not illustrate any issues in terms of the homogeneity of the sample, it can be regarded to have an impact on the findings. The experiences of the respondents exhibit a very strong positive outlook on

travel which can result in more severe dissonance and use of different resistance techniques. While the background information sourced from the interviewees did not include information on their socio-economic status, the fact that they had been able to engage in leisurely travel abroad functions as evidence of the reality they live in. The respondents experiences and attitudes towards leisurely travel are bound to be different from those individuals that do not have access to such means of relaxation.

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Appendix I: Interview structure

The interview structure was used for all of the interviews conducted for the use of this study. The interviews were conducted in Finnish, using the Finnish translations of the original questionnaire questions.

RQ1: What are the triggers of travel-related shame and guilt for female travellers?

- How do you feel about travelling these days?
- Does travelling produce any feelings of guilt or shame to you?
- In your own words, please describe what shame and guilt mean to you?
- Do you make difference between shame and guilt? If yes, please elaborate.
- When do you tend to feel the most guilty about travelling?
- What do you feel shameful and guilty about when travelling?

RQ2: How is shame and guilt being constructed in the confessionals?

- How do you react to travel related feelings of shame and guilt?
- How do your political views or personal values influence your feelings of guilt and shame?
- What sort of role do financial or economic aspects play in your feelings of guilt and shame?
- What is the impact of other people and your relationships on your feelings of guilt and shame?
- How do you think your cultural background affects your feelings of guilt and shame?
- How do environmental and ecological aspects affect your feelings of guilt and shame?
- Are there exceptions in travel contexts where shame and guilt does not occur?
- If you were to describe the feelings of shame and guilt, would you rate it positive, negative or somewhere inbetween, and why?

RQ3: How are shame and guilt being resisted in the confessionals?

- What do you do to avoid feeling shameful or guilty about travel?

- How have you changed your behaviour or habits to adapt with the feelings of guilt and shame?
- How do you cope with travel related shame and guilt?
- Are there things that you do in order to compensate for the feelings of shame and guilt?

RQ4: How do both the triggers and constructs of shame and guilt disrupt the order of consumption?

- How have your feelings of travel-related shame and guilt influenced your travel consumption and the way that you travel?
- In which ways do you feel like these feelings have changed your current or future travel plans?