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## Research paper

## Am I Ibiza? Measuring brand identification in the tourism context

Arturo Berrozpe<sup>a</sup>, Sara Campo<sup>b,\*</sup>, María J. Yagüe<sup>b</sup><sup>a</sup> Departamento de Economía de la Empresa de la Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, Facultad de Ciencias Sociales y Jurídicas, C/Madrid, 126, 28903 Getafe, Madrid, Spain<sup>b</sup> Departamento de Financiación e Investigación Comercial, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Empresariales, Ctra. colmenar Viejo Km 15,5, Madrid 28049, Spain

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## ABSTRACT

Understanding brand identification is critical when developing successful relationships between tourists and the destinations they visit. Nevertheless, there is an absence of academic work that measures tourist destination brand identification. The purpose of this study is to develop a scale to measure brand identification within the context of tourism. The study develops 24 measurement items to construct a survey instrument. The instrument is then administered to collect data from a sample of 308 Ibizan tourists. Following a rigorous scale development process, a one-dimensional brand identification model is identified. Finally, a refined scale consisting of seven measurement items is developed. This scale is validated with a new sample of 126 Ibizan visitors. Multi-step psychometric tests verify that the new brand identification scale is reliable and valid. Destination managers could use this scale to evaluate and identify highly acknowledged tourist segments, and more accurately implement the corresponding promotional strategies to this target.

## 1. Introduction

Most tourism marketers recognize the importance of building more sustainable and longer-lasting relationships with their clients. A common assumption in relationship marketing literature is that maintaining long-lasting relationships with customers leads to loyalty. Traditionally, marketing literature states that loyalty is achieved in three different ways: satisfaction, trust and commitment (e.g. Garbarino & Johnson, 1999; Gruen, 1995; Moorman, Deshpande, & Zaltman, 1993; Morgan & Hunt, 1994). However, insight provided by other social disciplines is useful to explore new alternatives that reinforce long-term relationships with customers. Within this new interdisciplinary context, brand identification and its construction process are fostered by knowledge coming from marketing and social psychology.

Understanding and measuring brand identification (BI) has received little attention from marketing in comparison with other relational constructs. Furthermore, the theory underlying brand identification and its application to destination brands from a measurement perspective is very scarce.

It is evident that there is an absence of research in the field of brand identification measurements in tourism, despite the fact that this specific field is important to understand tourist-brand relationships as it has emerged as a key characteristic of a desirable relationship in a variety of disciplines such as psychology, sociology, and in more

applied areas such as management and marketing. Moreover, tourism as an experience has unique characteristics (Chen, Bao, & Huang, 2014) that differ from those coming from psychology and other related disciplines. Thus, those experiences are typically measured in real-life scenarios rather than in extraordinary life settings, as is the case of tourism. As Neumann (1992), p. 183 stated, "travel often provides situations and contexts where people confront alternative possibilities for belonging to the world and others that differ from everyday life". Unfortunately, no research has been conducted to develop a reliable and valid scale to measure brand identification within the context of tourism except perhaps a recent paper by So, King, Hudson, and Meng (2017) applied to the airline industry.

Consequently, the present paper suggests that brand identification within the context of tourism has unique features that differ from those characterized in previous psychological or marketing measurements. Hence, a specific scale for the context of tourism destination is required to provide a better measurement and understanding about destination identification. For this reason, the purpose of this study is to develop a scale for the construct of BI applied to the Island of Ibiza.

This paper aims to develop and validate a scale to measure brand identification applied to the field of tourism by following a rigorous methodological process (Churchill, 1979; Hinkin, Tracey, & Enz, 1997). Fig. 1 shows the seven steps necessary to develop a reliable and valid scale to measure brand identification for a destination such as Ibiza.

\* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: [aberrozpe@emp.uc3m.es](mailto:aberrozpe@emp.uc3m.es) (A. Berrozpe), [sara.campo@uam.es](mailto:sara.campo@uam.es) (S. Campo), [maria.yague@uam.es](mailto:maria.yague@uam.es) (M.J. Yagüe).<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2018.04.005>

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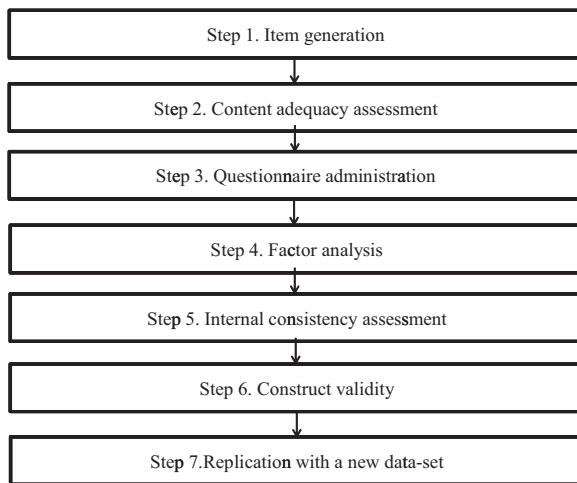


Fig. 1. Guidelines for scale development. Source: Adaptation from Hinkin et al. (1997).

## 2. Brand identification: conceptual framework

The theoretical justification for brand identification is based on the Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1978) and the Self-Categorization Theory (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). The key assumption underlying these theories (e.g. Tajfel, 1978, 1981) is that there are individual tries to achieve one's own positive social identity in relation to his/her reference groups.

Brand identification is a specific subtype of social identification. Social identification, drawing on the Social Identity Theory, is the perception of belongingness or connection with a particular group (Ashforth & Meal, 1989; Bhattacharya, Rao, & Glynn, 1995; Mael & Ashforth, 1992). Brand identification occurs as a result of a subjective process of comparison between brand identity and consumer identity (Dutton, Dukerich, & Harquail, 1994). People use brands to create and communicate their self-concept (Chaplin & John, 2005). Thus, consumers identify individually with those brands with which they share personality traits and common values to construct their social identity based on these reference brands (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006; Carlson et al., 2009; Dholakia, Bagozzi, & Pearo, 2004).

### 2.1. Concept of brand identification

According to Social Identity Theory, BI is a construct with various dimensions (cognitive, affective, and evaluative). Thus, BI from a tourist perspective, is defined as a tourist's psychological state of perceiving, feeling, and valuing his or her belongingness with a destination brand (adaptation from Lam, Ahearne, Hu, & Schillewaert, 2010; Lam, Ahearne, & Schillewaert, 2012; Lam, Ahearne, Mullins, Hayati, & Schillewaert, 2013). This state reflects the degree to which a person defines him or herself based on the same attributes that he/she considers could define the destination brand (adaptation from Hughes & Ahearne, 2010). Consequently, tourists express their social identity and sense of belonging to a social group through identification with a destination brand (Ekinci, Sirakaya-Turk, & Preciado, 2013).

When compared to a general branding context, essentially, there are five unique brand identification attributes within the context of tourism. Firstly, destination brand identity is incorporated, to a greater or lesser degree, into the tourist's own identity. Secondly, this overlapped identity has a much wider scope than the brand identity of a product or service because it includes all of the symbolic, relational, cultural, and historic elements that define the destination (Berrozpe, Campo, & Yagüe, 2017). Thirdly, the complexity of this integrated identity is greater because its own construction involves more stakeholders (Saraniemi, 2010) such as tourist destination managers, tourist

industry representatives and residents. Fourth, tourists join together at a particular destination brand which is multidimensional (Kaplan, Yurt, Guneri, & Kurtulus, 2010; Zenker, 2011) not to be an individual, but to join a collective group (Voase, 2012). Lastly, memorable brand experiences are an extremely important contributor to Consumer Brand Identification (CBI) given the central role the service encounter plays in a customer's evaluation of the brand (Grace & O'Cass, 2004; Hudson & Ritchie, 2009; So et al., 2017).

### 2.2. Dimensions of brand identification

Social Identity Theory states that the cognitive dimension of brand identification is the knowledge that the subject has with regards to belonging to a certain group. The emotional component is the sense of emotional implication with a certain group. Finally, the evaluative dimension is the positive or negative value associated with the sense of belonging to a specific group (Ellemers, Kortekaas, & Ouwerkerk, 1999; Tajfel, 1978).

From the perspective of tourism, tourists identify with the place they visit by considering themselves as a member of that place. They have a feeling of belonging to the place, and/or they like the influence of the place on their sense of value (adaptation from So, King, Sparks, & Wang, 2013).

Many studies indicate the presence of the cognitive dimension in different areas such as social and organizational environment (e.g. Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006; Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000; Ellemers, Kortekaas, & Ouwerkerk, 1999), branding (e.g. Lam et al., 2010, 2012, 2013; Kuenzel & Halliday, 2008, 2010) and destination branding (e.g. Choo, Park, & Petrick, 2011; Ekinci et al., 2013; Nam, Ekinci, & Whyatt, 2011; So et al., 2013; Stokburger-Sauer, 2011). Theoretically, it was the only essential dimension because the subjects identified must be aware that the group exists and that he or she is part of that group (Jackson, 2002).

The literature is unanimous in pointing out that its main function consists in labelling a person as a subject identified with a brand, given that the theory of social identity emphasizes self-categorization as the main source from which the cognitive element flows (Henry, Arrow, & Carini, 1999). Self-categorization is based on attributes shared with others, by means of which an individual is defined and differentiates him or herself as a member of a social category (Flippen, Hornstein, Siegal, & Weitzman, 1996; Tajfel, 1978). This self-categorization creates a distinction between the members and non-members of the group. Thus, brands could constitute the basis for classifying individuals into social categories (Stokburger-Sauer, 2010) because self-categorization appears as a consequence of the identification with the brand process. This brand could represent self-relevant social categories with which consumers could identify themselves (Belk, 1988; Fournier, 1998).

Secondly, consumers may also be identified based on emotional causes. When the actual self-concept is aligned with a specific group, it is probable that a certain emotional union arises towards that group (Turner et al., 1987). In this regard, Kerr and Kaufmann-Gilliland (1994) added that group identification could develop as a result of affective links between members of the group (Henry et al., 1999). In general, the affective dimension of brand identification (Balmer & Liao, 2007; Homburg, Wieseke, & Hoyer, 2009; Lam et al., 2010, 2012, 2013; Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar, & Sen, 2012), and more specifically with the destination, appears in a good number of theoretical and empiric studies (e.g. Choo et al., 2011; Ekinci et al., 2013; Nam et al., 2011; So et al., 2013; Stokburger-Sauer, 2011).

Finally, Edwards (2005) pointed out that identification also implies an evaluative component that acts as a differentiating element of the concept. Bergami and Bagozzi (2000) identified this evaluative component with individual self-esteem based on the group (Dholakia et al., 2004). From an attitudinal point of view, Phinney (1990) included aspects such as pride, satisfaction and positive or negative feelings associated with belonging to a group.

**Table 1**  
Characteristics of brand identification.

Source	Characteristic
Bhattacharya and Sen (2003)	BI is a voluntary and selective relationship with a brand
Ashforth and Mael (1989); Bergami and Bagozzi (2000); Bhattacharya and Sen (2003); Dutton et al. (1994)	BI embodies elements of brand identity (features, attributes and values) to personal identity
Bhattacharya et al. (1995); Gupta and Pirsch (2006)	BI helps to the concurrence of consumer and company's objectives
Scott and Lane (2000)	BI involves the existence of shared values between consumer and brand
Hughes and Ahearne (2010)	BI has different degrees
Hughes and Ahearne (2010)	BI entails an involvement with brand success or failure
Bhattacharya et al. (1995); Lam et al. (2010)	Consumers can develop multiple identifications with multiple brands
Dick & Basu (1994); Lam et al. (2010)	BI considers the psychological value and utility of the brand in relation to other competitive brands
Ekinci et al. (2013)	The direction of BI is from brand image to social self or social group (outward, not inward)
Lam et al. (2010)	BI is not contingent on actual use
Lam et al. (2013)	BI is dynamic
Lam et al. (2010)	BI is not only for high-involvement and/or publicly consumed brands. It is also for low-involvement and privately consumed product categories
Donovan et al. (2006)	BI implies a strong emotional attachment with a brand and a sense of belongingness to the brand

The evaluative component was recognized in the conceptual scope of identification in several studies (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006; Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000; Donovan, Janda, & Suh, 2006; Ellemers et al., 1999) and in the field of tourist destination BI (e.g. Choo et al., 2011). However, its inclusion in measurement models was not generalized (e.g. Algesheimer, Dholakia, & Herrmann, 2005; Brewer & Silver, 2000; Deaux, 1996; Jackson & Smith, 1999). Likewise, there was no unanimity concerning the dimensionality of the mentioned concept. Meanwhile Bergami and Bagozzi (2000), Donovan et al. (2006), Ellemers et al. (1999) and Jackson (2002) consider it one-dimensional, Ashmore, Deaux, and McLaughlin-Volpe (2004), Dimmock, Grove, and Eklund (2005), Heere and James (2007), Lam et al. (2010, 2013) or Lam et al. (2012) and Luhtanen and Crocker (1992) among others, considered it to be two-dimensional.

### 2.3. Characteristics of brand identification

The BI concept includes a set of unique characteristics. A systematic review of the literature examining the differentiating characteristics of BI is described below in Table 1.

A review of these unique characteristics suggests that brand identification is a desirable state for any destination brand. Accordingly, it is necessary to research how these exclusive characteristics of BI could affect the selection of a tourist destination.

### 2.4. Distinctions between brand identification and other concepts

Conceptually, brand identification is often confused with other brand-related constructs. These brand-related constructs are: (1) brand love/passion (e.g. Fournier, 1998), (2) brand self-connection (e.g. Escalas & Bettman, 2005; Fournier, 1998), (3) brand interdependence (e.g. Fournier, 1998), (4) brand intimacy (e.g. Fournier, 1998), (6) brand partner quality (e.g. Fournier, 1998), (7) brand trust (e.g. Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001), (8) brand loyalty (e.g. Dick & Basu, 1994; Oliver, 1999), (9) brand sensitivity (e.g. Kapferer & Laurent, 1992), (10) brand attachment, (11) brand affect (e.g. Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2002; Morgan & Hunt, 1994), (12) involvement with branded products (e.g. Coulter, Price & Feick, 2003), (13) brand commitment, (14) self-brand connection (e.g. Escalas & Bettman 2005), (15) brand credibility (e.g. Erdem, Swait, & Valenzuela, 2006), and, lastly, (16) brand equity (e.g. Aaker, 1995).

There are three basic differences between BI and these brand-related constructs. First, only BI captures and reveals the psychological oneness (Ashforth & Mael, 1989) between brand identity and consumer identity. Second, BI has an exclusively differentiated evaluative component or a positive or negative value connotation attached to this group membership (Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000). Third, BI goes beyond the

acquisition of a product to a more experiential view of consumption that accentuates the dynamic interactions between customers and brands as valued relationship partners (Lam et al., 2010).

### 2.5. Measure of brand identification

So et al. (2017) stated that most brand identification studies (e.g. Kim, Han & Park, 2001; Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012) measure BI as a unidimensional construct. Very few empirical studies have been developed with a multidimensional measurement for BI (e.g. Bagozzi, Bergami, Marzocchi, & Morandin, 2012; Lam et al., 2013). Moreover, specific destination BI scales have not been developed within the tourist environment from our knowledge, all studies about BI applied to the tourist sector are adaptations from other measuring contexts (e.g. Choo et al., 2011; Ekinci et al., 2013; Nam et al., 2011; So et al., 2013; So, King, Sparks, & Wang, 2016; So et al., 2017; Stokburger-Sauer, 2011). Consequently, no measurement studies have been developed specifically for the field of tourism. Further research is required in this field.

### 2.6. Positive consequences of brand identification

BI is the strongest extreme of the relationship between a destination brand and a tourist. It provides competitive advantages for those destinations with highly identified tourist segments. Scholarly literature on this point is unanimous, as summarized in the 11 positive outcomes of BI (Table 2).

Taken together, these positive outcomes shown on Table 2, suggest that destinations can benefit significantly through consistent support of brand identification.

## 3. Measuring brand identification within the context of tourist destination

To start the initial process, a tourist destination brand was chosen. Ibiza (Spain) was chosen as the destination brand due to four reasons. First of all, this destination is a worldwide, renowned destination brand (Michaud, 2012) where millions of tourists go to enjoy the 'Ibiza experience' Second, Ibiza is a tourism destination brand, which for Cirer-Costa (2010) combines the main features of a central destination (Papatheodorou, 2004). Third, Ibiza is a preferred destination for national and international tourists with three million tourists in 2016 (Ibestat, 2016). Fourth, it holds a strong and distinguishable brand identity with iconic characteristics which may benefit the development of identification (Berrozpe et al., 2017: p. 1033). According to these authors, these characteristics are "a physique dimension of clubs and discotheques, an exciting personality, an atmosphere of harmony, moments of collective fusion, a clubber image, and the figure of a young,

**Table 2**  
Positive consequences of brand identification.

Source	Positive Outcomes
Ahearne, Bhattacharya, and Gruen (2005); Algesheimer et al. (2005); Bhattacharya and Sen (2003); He and Mukherjee (2009); He and Li (2011); He, Li, and Harris (2012); Homburg et al. (2009); Kuenzel and Halliday (2010); Kumar and Kaushik (2017); Marín, Ruiz, and Rubio (2009); Nam et al. (2011); Popp and Worastschek (2017); So et al. (2013); Ahearne et al. (2005)	1. Brand loyalty
Kuenzel and Halliday (2008)	2. Consumers tendency to purchase more
Tuškej, Golob, and Podnar (2013)	3. Buying intention
Ahearne et al. (2005); Bhattacharya and Sen (2003); Du, Bhattacharya, and Sen (2007); Kim, Han, and Park (2001); Kuenzel and Halliday (2008); Popp and Worastschek (2017); Tuškej et al. (2013)	4. Brand commitment
Ahearne et al. (2005); Bhattacharya and Sen (2003); Du et al. (2007)	5. Positive word of mouth
Homburg et al. (2009)	6. Cross-selling
Bhattacharya and Sen (2003); Du et al. (2007); Einwiller, Fedorikhin, Johnson, and Kamins (2006); Hughes and Ahearne (2010); Swaminathan, Page and Gürhan Canli (2007)	7. Willingness to pay
Nam et al. (2011); So et al. (2013)	8. Consumer resistance to negative information
Nam et al. (2011); Popp and Worastschek (2017); So et al. (2013)	9. Positive consumer evaluation
Stockburger-Sauer et al. (2012)	10. Customer satisfaction
	11. Physical brand advocacy

liberal tourist who loves to party".

### 3.1. Development of the brand identification scale

The process suggested by Hinkin et al. (1997), which is built on the work of Churchill (1979) and Hinkin (1995), was followed. It began by reviewing literature that researched the identification in different academic fields of study. After this review, brand identification was defined within the context of tourist destination (BI). Then, a set of 24 possible scale items were created.

For the second phase, three focus groups were supervised, each with seven to eight tourists who had recently visited Ibiza (Berrozpe et al., 2017). The duration of each group was approximately two hours. In this qualitative phase, additional items referring to the cognitive component 'I think I'm much like Ibiza', as well as the affective component 'I feel good when someone speaks well of Ibiza', 'I like it when people say I look like Ibiza', 'When someone speaks well of Ibiza, I feel as if they were speaking well of me', were obtained. Three general indicators to identify with a brand were also found. Organized from a lesser to a greater strength these were: 'In general, I identify with Ibiza', 'My identity is like Ibiza's' and 'I am Ibiza'.

For stage three, a panel of five expert judges was selected (all marketing and tourism faculty members). The academics were requested to ascribe each of the possible items to one of the identification dimensions or to specify what items did not fit well. Only those items that were selected by at least four academics were considered valid. This procedure generated a set of 11 items that were graded on a seven-point Likert scale as indicated in Table 3. Answering possibilities were scored from completely disagree (+1) to completely agree (+7).

The methodological process supplied the 11 items of the BI scale included in the online survey questionnaire for tourists who had visited Ibiza for recreational purposes. An on-line survey was carried out by

**Table 3**  
Initial items.

Nomenclature	Items	Source
Cognitive identification1 (CI <sub>1</sub> )	After observing figure (see Appendix), indicate to what degree your personal identity overlaps with Ibiza's identity	Bergami and Bagozzi (2000)
Cognitive identification2 (CI <sub>2</sub> )	I think Ibiza is part of what I am	Henry et al. (1999)
Cognitive identification3 (CI <sub>3</sub> )	I think I'm Ibiza	Qualitative analysis
Affective identification1 (AI <sub>1</sub> )	I feel good when someone speaks well of Ibiza	Qualitative analysis
Affective identification2 (AI <sub>2</sub> )	I like it when people say I look like Ibiza	Qualitative analysis
Affective identification3 (AI <sub>3</sub> )	When someone speaks well of Ibiza, I feel as if they were speaking well of me	Qualitative analysis
Affective identification4 (AI <sub>4</sub> )	I feel I'm a part of Ibiza	Adaptation by Lam et al. (2010)
Evaluative identification1 (EI <sub>1</sub> )	I'm happy to be a part of the Ibiza community	Jackson (2002)
Evaluative identification2 (EI <sub>2</sub> )	I'm proud to be a part of the Ibiza community	Jackson (2002)
Evaluative identification3 (EI <sub>3</sub> )	I'm a valuable member of the Ibiza community	Bagozzi and Dholakia (2006)
Evaluative identification4 (EI <sub>4</sub> )	I'm an important member of the Ibiza community	Bagozzi and Dholakia (2006)

**Table 4**  
Descriptive summary of the sample demographic.

		%
Gender	Male	48.8
	Female	51.2
Age	< 25	14.5
	25–34	47.4
	35–44	19.4
	45–64	17.0
	> 64	1.7
Education	Without studies	0.3
	Primary School	1.4
	High/Secondary school	18.0
	University degree	72.3
	Other	8.0
Marital status	Single	44.6
	Married/ Living with a partner	51.5
	Divorced/Separated	3.5
	Widowed	0.3
Occupation	Student	15.9
	Employed	65.4
	Unemployed	6.9
	Self-employed	7.6
	Housewife	2.1
	Retired	2.1
Average monthly individual income	< 600 €	15.0
	600–1000 €	13.2
	1001–2000 €	46.2
	2001–3000 €	20.3
	> 3000 €	5.3
Household size	1 member	17.7
	2 members	28.0
	3 members	19.8
	4 members	24.1
	≥ 5 members	10.4



**Table 5**  
Descriptive measures.

Identification Component	Item	Average	Standard deviation
Cognitive	Average	3.69	1.65
	CI <sub>1</sub> <sup>a</sup>	4.01	1.84
	CI <sub>2</sub>	3.49	1.60
	CI <sub>3</sub>	3.58	1.50
Affective	Average	3.68	1.54
	AI <sub>1</sub>	4.79	1.50
	AI <sub>2</sub>	3.57	1.48
	AI <sub>3</sub>	3.16	1.52
	AI <sub>4</sub>	3.19	1.68
Evaluative	Average	3.21	1.51
	EI <sub>1</sub>	3.63	1.57
	EI <sub>2</sub>	3.52	1.54
	EI <sub>3</sub>	2.89	1.49
	EI <sub>4</sub>	2.80	1.46

<sup>a</sup> To standardize the statistical analysis, this item that previously had 8 positions was recalculated to 7 points.

contracting a specialized panel service firm (Toluna.com). Three hundred and eight on-line questionnaires were obtained. The profile of tourists responding to the survey (Table 4) was distributed almost equally between men and women with a slight female predominance; these were young (61.9% under 35 years of age), single (44.6%), employed with a monthly income over €1000 (74.6%) who had recently been to Ibiza (51% visited the island the same year of the study, or the previous year) and had travelled with friends (57.1%) or their partners (29.5%). With 2016 data included in the Balearic Island Tourism Annual, an adequate representation of the Ibizan tourist sample extracted was verified.

The complete questionnaire was used to study various aspects such as characteristics of the trip (reason, moment and company) and degree of brand identification. Lastly, a series of socio-demographic data and behavioral questions (age, sex, social class and travel experience) were asked.

### 3.2. Item analysis

Table 5 shows the average scores, typical deviation and variation coefficient obtained for all scale items. It can be deduced that most of the average values are close to the central value and even three points below for certain items referring to the evaluative component (EI<sub>3</sub> and EI<sub>4</sub>). However, item AI<sub>1</sub> (affective component) had the highest score (4.79). Also, the global averages per component indicate that the highest grade was given to the cognitive component with 3.69 points, followed very closely by the affective component with 3.68 points. Finally, the evaluative component obtained a minor value with an average score of 3.21.

### 3.3. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA)

The analysis based on exploratory factor analysis (EFA), using principal components analysis (PCA) with Varimax rotation showed in Table 6, suggests summarizing the information into two factors. However, caution must be exercised because literature opts for one-dimensional or three-dimensional solutions. The application of standard deuration criteria based on loading factors lead to one-dimensional solution. Furthermore, the commonality of all items surpasses the recommended acceptance value of 1.5 (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006).

### 3.4. Brand identification construct: structure and dimensionality

Based on the exploratory analysis and the absence of previous conclusive literature, it was necessary to identify whether the structure

**Table 6**  
Results of EFA.

Items	Commonality	Factor 1 (rotated component)	Factor 2 (rotated component)
CI <sub>1</sub>	0.562	0.201	0.722
CI <sub>2</sub>	0.788	0.453	0.763
CI <sub>3</sub>	0.816	0.446	0.786
AI <sub>1</sub>	0.670	0.143	0.806
AI <sub>2</sub>	0.585	0.520	0.560
AI <sub>3</sub>	0.688	0.689	0.461
AI <sub>4</sub>	0.780	0.652	0.596
EI <sub>1</sub>	0.700	0.660	0.515
EI <sub>2</sub>	0.762	0.711	0.507
EI <sub>3</sub>	0.917	0.934	0.212
EI <sub>4</sub>	0.893	0.929	0.172
Determinant matrix correlations	8.95E <sup>-006</sup>		
Eigen-Value	7.1		1.060
Percentage of explained variance (per factor)	39.195%		34.990%
Total explained variance (accumulated)	74.185%		
KMO	0.892		
Bartlett's sphericity coefficient	Chi square = 3516.211; sig. (p-value) = 0.000; d.f. = 55		

of the measuring scale of BI was reflective or formative, and whether it was a first or second-order construct.

Initially, it was verified that the measurement scale did not meet any of the conditions for the formative constructs (Jarvis, Mackenzie & Podsakoff, 2003). Thus, in the present research, the correlations between the latent constructs were high; evidence of multi co-linearity appeared together in the data; and, lastly, problems regarding absence of normality were not detected. The structure of the data analyzed showed that BI dimensions were significantly inter-correlated. This finding suggests that they are diverse aspects or manifestations of a common construct (Jackson, 2002). According to this view, the BI construct is a reflective construct where the various items are manifestations of the latent variable.

Then, the 11 items comprising the scale were examined more rigorously to verify the dimensionality of the concept. The two-factor structure was not analyzed because it is not supported by the literature studied. In this phase, the researchers tried to verify whether it was a tri-dimensional construct or if it was a one dimensional construct. For that purpose, a series of confirmatory factor models were estimated using AMOS 23.

Table 7 presents the global adjustment indicators for both measuring models considered. By applying the criteria recommended by Hu and Bentler (1998, 1999), Miles and Shevlin (1998), Tabachnik and Fidell (2007), and Bagozzi and Yi (2012), it was concluded that the one-dimensional model obtained a better global adjustment than tridi-dimensional model ( $\chi^2/d.f. < 2$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ; and more acceptable indicators in CFI, TLI, GFI, AGFI, RMSEA and SRMR).

The statistical criteria for confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) recommended the elimination of the AI<sub>1</sub> item (affective component: 'I feel good when someone speaks well of Ibiza'). The same holds true for EI<sub>4</sub> item (evaluative component: 'I'm an important member of the Ibiza community'). Also, we eliminated items CI<sub>2</sub> and CI<sub>3</sub> (cognitive dimension: 'I think Ibiza is part of what I am' and 'I think I'm Ibiza') to comply criteria for discriminant validity and content validity. The CFA result confirms that the best measurement of the cognitive component is those provided by Bergami and Bagozzi (2000).

On the other hand, the indicators relating to the discriminant validity of the identification measurement dimensions shown in Table 8 suggested that the structure of the destination BI is one-dimensional because the tri-dimensional model fails to comply with all discriminant validity criteria (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; Fornell & Larcker, 1981). This approximation is coherent with recent previous tourism studies

**Table 7**  
Alternative models.

Model specification	$\chi^2$ (d.f.)	$\chi^2/d.f$	p	CFI	TLI	GFI	AGFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Model A (three dimensions)	78.740 (21 d.f.)	3.750	0.000	0.977	0.960	0.949	0.891	0.095	0.0419
Model B (one-dimensional)	12.777 (7 d.f.)	1.825	0.078	0.997	0.990	0.989	0.954	0.052	0.0130

**Table 8**  
Discriminant validity tests for three-dimensional identification model.

Test	Results	Discriminant validity
1st test	Confidence interval $\neq 1$	Value 1 appears in all the intervals No
2nd test	H0: $\chi^2$ restricted = $\chi^2$ non-restricted	$\chi^2$ restricted = 84.957 $\chi^2$ non-restricted = 78.740 Yes
3rd test	AVE root > correlation	AVE root cognitive-cognitive < cognitive-affective correlation (0.846 < 0.853) No

(e.g. Ekinci et al., 2013; Hwang & Han, 2014; Hwang & Lyu, 2015; Hwang & Hyun, 2017; Nam et al., 2011; So et al., 2013; So et al., 2016; Stokburger-Sauer, 2011; Zenker, Braun, & Petersen, 2017) which have also considered BI a unidimensional construct. It should be noted that there is a recent publication (So et al., 2017) that treat each dimension separately but its application is focused particularly on an airline brand and not on a destination brand.

The analysis thus concludes that BI with a destination is a first order, reflective, and one-dimensional scale that incorporates the cognitive, affective and evaluative aspects of the theoretical concept.

3.5. Scale reliability

Internal consistency estimates for the brand identification scale are shown in Table 9. The composite reliability scale (SCR) and average variance extracted (AVE) surpassed the selected cutoff points of 0.7 (Churchill, 1979) and 0.50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) respectively. Moreover, Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the overall scale was 0.91, which exceeded the level of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978). Consequently, all indices supported the internal consistency of the BI scale.

3.6. Assessment of validity

This phase validated the instrument and established its validity. The aim was to determine the ability of the BI scale to measure the brand

**Table 9**  
Brand identification measurement: Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Scale Reliability<sup>a</sup>.

Construct	Item	Li	R <sup>b</sup>	Ei	Reliability		Validity	
					ALPHA	SCR <sup>b</sup>	AVE <sup>c</sup>	Convergent validity
Brand Identification with the destination	CI <sub>1</sub> : After observing the figure (see Appendix), indicate to what degree your personal identity overlaps with Ibiza's identity	0.62	0.37	0.63	0.91	0.92	0.61	t = —
	AI <sub>2</sub> : I like it when people say I look Ibizan	0.73	0.54	0.46				t = 9.51*
	AI <sub>3</sub> : When someone speaks well of Ibiza, I feel as if they were speaking well of me	0.82	0.66	0.34				t = 9.81*
	AI <sub>4</sub> : I feel I'm a part of Ibiza	0.87	0.76	0.24				t = 10.81*
	EI <sub>1</sub> : I'm happy to be a part of the Ibiza community	0.77	0.59	0.41				t = 10.14*
	EI <sub>2</sub> : I'm proud to be a part of the Ibiza community	0.82	0.66	0.34				t = 10.55*
	EI <sub>3</sub> : I'm a valuable member of the Ibiza community	0.82	0.67	0.33				t = 10.50*

Significance level: \*p < 0.001; Li: Standardized loading; Ei = (1 - R<sup>2</sup>): error variance.

<sup>a</sup> Fit statistics for measurement model:  $\chi^2/d.f.$  = 1.825; GFI = 0.989; SRMR = 0.130;0.130; CFI = 0.997; NFI = 0.977; NNFI = 0.990.

<sup>b</sup> Scale Composite Reliability.

<sup>c</sup> Average Variance Extracted.

**Table 10**  
Discriminant validity tests between BI and destination loyalty.

Test	Results	Discriminant validity
1st test	Covariance confidence interval $\neq 1$	Covariance confidence interval = (0.36; 0.77) Yes
2nd test	H0: $\chi^2$ restricted = $\chi^2$ non-restricted	$\chi^2$ restricted = 57.795 $\chi^2$ non-restricted = 53.510 Yes
3rd test	AVE Root > correlation	Brand identification: 0.784 > 0.562 Destination Loyalty: 0.928 > 0.562 Yes

identification construct.

As Table 9 shows, all items demonstrated appropriate convergent validity confirmed by the fact that all of the parameters are statistically significant (Bagozzi & Yi, 2012).

Discriminant validity between BI and destination loyalty, a construct with which the external validity of the scale is verified, is compared by applying the three methods widely accepted by the literature (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Discriminant validity between BI and destination loyalty was also verified (see Table 10).

3.7. Validation of the brand identification scale

Another sample was used for validation to avoid possible biases by using the same sample for validation (Baumgartner & Homburg, 1996). An email with the same questionnaire was sent to a sample of 126 subjects who reported their tourist experience in Ibiza. Of these, 46% were men and 54% women, 65.1% of the respondents were people younger than 35 years of age, and 70.6% of the participants had a university degree.

These re-estimated tests revealed that the same one-factor structure was specified for the validation sample. The model fit obtained was acceptable and all factor loadings were significant and positive. Moreover, both the coefficient alpha and the scale composite reliabilities (SCR) were above the cut-off points recommended by the

**Table 11**  
Reliability of brand identification measure in the validation sample.

	Validation Sample <sup>a</sup>		AVE
	ALPHA	SCR	
Brand Identification	0.892	0.894	0.551

<sup>a</sup> Fit statistics for measurement model:  $\chi^2/d.f. = 2.022$ ; GFI = 0.970; SRMR = 0.026; CFI = 0.988; NFI = 0.977; NNFI = 0.964.

literature (see Table 11), as was the average variance extracted (AVE).

3.8. Relationship of brand identification with loyalty construct

After the previous development of BI scale and the verification of its psychometric properties, the research sought to find out the possible relationship of this construct with other constructs as predicted by the theory. According to this perspective, the external validity of the scale was verified with regards to the brand loyalty construct. This relationship has been verified in marketing literature (Ahearne et al., 2005; Algesheimer et al., 2005; Bergami & Bazozzi, 2000; Bhattacharya et al., 1995; Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; He & Mukherjee, 2009; Kim et al., 2001; Kuenzel & Halliday, 2010; Marin, Ruiz, & Rubio, 2009; Popp & Worastschek, 2017) as well as in tourism literature (Choo et al., 2011; Ekinci et al., 2013; Kumar & Kaushik, 2017; Stockburger-Sauer, 2011).

An attitudinal perspective was adopted to measure loyalty towards the destination brand. This adapted Yoon and Kim's (2000) scale using three items: 'I think I will visit the destination again in the future' (L<sub>1</sub>); 'I'll recommend the destination to friends and family' (L<sub>2</sub>); and 'I would recommend this destination if someone asked my advice' (L<sub>3</sub>).

Both reliability and validity between constructs were demonstrated (see Table 12) after completing the corresponding tests. The structural model was estimated ( $\chi^2/d.f. = 1.911$ , CFI = 0.991, TLI = 0.985, RMSEA = 0.054 and SRMR = 0.041) and the results obtained gave robust support to the relationship between BI and destination loyalty (see Fig. 2).

It was confirmed that BI is a prior construct with sufficient explicative capacity to explain destination loyalty. More specifically, the parameter that relates tourist identification and brand destination loyalty shows a highly significant value of  $\beta = 0.56$ . In summary, it can be concluded that there is a strong relationship between both constructs (Kline, 2005), which is in agreement with the assumptions found in the literature.

**Table 12**  
Constructs measurement summary.

Construct	Item	Li	R <sup>2</sup>	Ei	Reliability		Validity	
					ALPHA	SCR	AVE	Convergent validity
Identification with the destination brand	CI <sub>1</sub> : After observing figure (see Appendix), indicate to what degree your personal identity overlaps with Ibiza's identity	0.56	0.32	0.68	0.91	0.92	0.61	t = 9.67*
	AI <sub>2</sub> : I like it when people say I look Ibizan	0.70	0.48	0.52				t = —
	AI <sub>3</sub> : When someone speaks well of Ibiza, I feel as if they were speaking well of me	0.73	0.53	0.47				t = 14.43*
	AI <sub>4</sub> : I feel I'm a part of Ibiza	0.92	0.85	0.16				t = 13.86*
	EI <sub>1</sub> : I'm happy to be a part of the Ibiza community	0.85	0.71	0.29				t = 12.59*
	EI <sub>2</sub> : I'm proud to be a part of the Ibiza community	0.90	0.81	0.19				t = 13.38*
	EI <sub>3</sub> : I'm a valuable member of the Ibiza community	0.78	0.60	0.40				t = 13.14*
Destination brand loyalty	L <sub>1</sub> : I believe I will visit this destination again in the future	0.86	0.75	0.25	0.95	0.95	0.86	t = —
	L <sub>2</sub> : I will recommend this destination to relatives and friends	0.98	0.95	0.05				t = 26.80*
	L <sub>3</sub> : I would recommend this destination to anyone who asks for my advice on what tourist destinations to visit	0.94	0.89	0.11				t = 24.95*

Significance level: \* p < 0.001. Li: Standardized loading; Ei = (1 - R<sup>2</sup>): error variance.

4. Conclusions, implications, limitations and future lines of research

4.1. Conclusions

Unfortunately, there is an important gap in the literature when it comes to the field of tourism destination branding. Despite the interest in brand identification since the late 2010s, there has been virtually no academic research that develops the measurement of this concept within the tourist environment. Due to the inexistence of a specific and accepted measurement in the area of tourism destination, this research (1) develops a multi-item measurement to measure brand identification in tourism, (3) validates its psychometric properties and, finally, (3) verifies its external validity through the relationship with destination loyalty.

This research represents a significant contribution to an increasing body of tourism literature about brand identification. It represents the first empiric development of a scale brand identification applied to tourists. In this regard, the study and its application are pioneers and open doors for future studies relating to tourist's identification.

Our analysis of brand identification conceptualization was carried out by integrating several disciplines. We integrated theoretic proposals found in marketing and social psychology that incorporate evaluative and affective elements, as recommended by previous authors (Lam et al., 2010, 2012, 2013).

Moreover, our results help to evaluate the importance of each aspect in destination identification. More specifically, it has been proven that the affective and evaluative aspects have a greater impact than the cognitive aspects in destination identification. According to this, affective aspects show the highest values followed closely by evaluative aspects. Conversely, cognitive aspects are less important than the others. These findings suggest that emotional ties arising from the sense of belonging to a destination together with evaluative aspects are more important in the perception of identification with a destination than the consciousness of this belonging or self-categorization.

Our findings confirm that brand identification with a destination constitutes a variable that is crucial to developing loyalty (Dekimpe, Steenkamp, Mellens, & VandenAbeelee, 1997). The development of an identification measurement for tourists offers new theoretical perspectives in the study of loyalty. The significant effect of brand identification with Ibiza was confirmed by tourists' loyalty. Consequently, we have incorporated certain, less studied psychological aspects of loyalty in our study, which was directly related to social nature of identification (e.g. Pan, Sheng, & Xie, 2012; Rundle-Thiele, 2005; Söderlund, 2006). The state of self-categorization presented in brand identification allowed tourists to associate positively with a certain group.

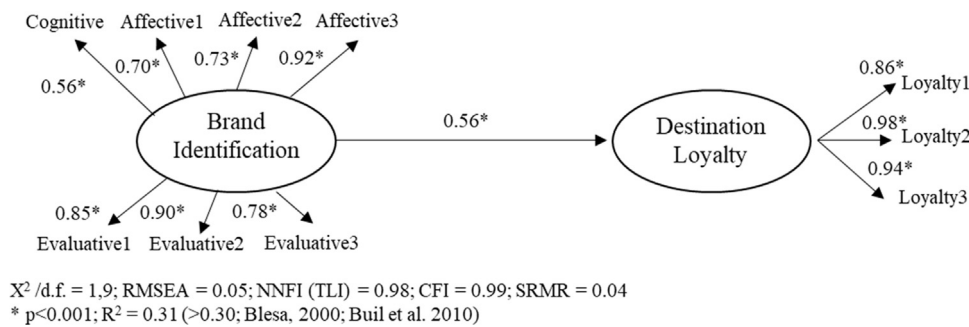


Fig. 2. Relationship between BI and destination loyalty.

Subsequently, this produced a social and psychological process that reinforced loyalty towards the destination brand (Ekinci et al., 2013).

This scale is a reliable and valid instrument to expand the current tourist marketing literature. A review of identification concept literature revealed that BI is a major predictor of a number of positive results from tourists. Within this perspective, among these positive results are the intention of visiting a certain destination, tendency to visit the destination more frequently and for a longer period of time on each visit, commitment of the tourist with the destination, an increase in recommending it to others, a willingness to pay a premium price or, even, resistance to accepting negative information about the destination. For this reason, BI with a destination will be a desirable state to be achieved by tourism destination managers.

#### 4.2. Implications for management

In today's highly competitive environments, tourist destination managers must be aware of the importance of having tools to improve their brand equity (Keller, 2003). At present, the overall goal of establishing long-term and profitable relations with tourists cannot be achieved through traditional lines of action. Other activities must be carried out to work towards the construction of a destination brand with an attractive identity and values that promote the identification of the tourists with that brand.

A number of implications for management may be derived from the study. First, the availability of a tourist destination brand identification measurement instrument offers destination managers the possibility of refining their sales policies. Not only does it open doors to the development promotional campaigns to identify the destination, while at the same time putting forward the possibility of measuring the potential identification achieved. This measuring capacity allows them to compare their destination with those of their competitors. In this sense, destination managers could influence through communication these affective and evaluative aspects that contribute considerably more to destination BI.

The second implication of our study for management refers to brand equity. This research verifies that brand identification creates destination loyalty, which is the main dimension of brand equity (Dekimpe et al., 1997). In this regard, our brand identification scale could be considered a useful tool when managing the brand-destination equity. This is especially true due to the intangible nature of tourism where the process of identification is expected to be stronger (Ahearne et al., 2005).

A third implication is that our scale may help companies and organizations locate tourists who are more favorable to identify with a destination. These highly identified customers could become a source of competitive advantage (Stokburger-Sauer, 2011) by creating long term and strong relationships (Ahearne et al., 2005; Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000; Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003). From the management perspective, this information allows and facilitates the development of promotional campaigns aimed at those segments that have already been identified with the destination brand. These campaigns would target those

segments with greater possibilities of identifying or increasing their degree of identification. Another additional source of identification could be found in carrying out activities sponsored by tourism related authorities based on the co-creation of value in such a way that tourists feel that they belong to a social group with its own significance or meaning (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004).

According to this view, tourism authorities or destination managers may co-create value by creating or monitoring travel groups of identified tourists linked to the destination (Ekinci et al., 2013). Also, they could promote participation in festivities or activities closely related to the Ibiza brand. Another co-creation action could involve highly identified subjects in their promotional campaigns. For example would be the participation of real tourists as actors in promotional advertisements or in viral campaigns about the destination brand. Within this perspective, stakeholders may use new marketing techniques focused on identified market segments such as augmented reality, Internet-induced marketing techniques and/or street marketing. In this regard, tourists could even participate in the design of new destination services that were closely linked to their shared values.

Finally, in times of market disruptions, brand destination managers need to reinforce those highly identified tourists previously detected using our scale. Using these strategies could be very important because this segment could generate a buffer from the shock through social creativity in favor of the brands (Lam et al., 2010)

#### 4.3. Limitations and future lines of research

The main limitations of this study derive from the online data collection which presents a series of potential biases as self-selection and coverage (Chang & Krosnick, 2009; Faas, 2004). In this case, the sample obtained although sufficient in number does not allow the results to be generalized for all tourist types (e.g. family tourism or sports tourism). Future research should include other destination brands, control of those factors that could affect brand identification and expand the area of application to new destination brands and new destination countries.

Nevertheless, the application of an international tourist destination such as Ibiza provides an opportunity to apply the scale to other international brand destinations. In this sense, the need for its adaptation to various tourist destinations also presents interesting lines for future research. Also, it would be interesting for future work to incorporate the dynamism of the brand identification concept through longitudinal studies. Lastly, it would be interesting to review how this brand identification measurement could change after diverse events such as advertisement on mass media, press campaigns, news in the media about the destination or even the participation of tourists in co-creation activities organized by tourist destination managers.

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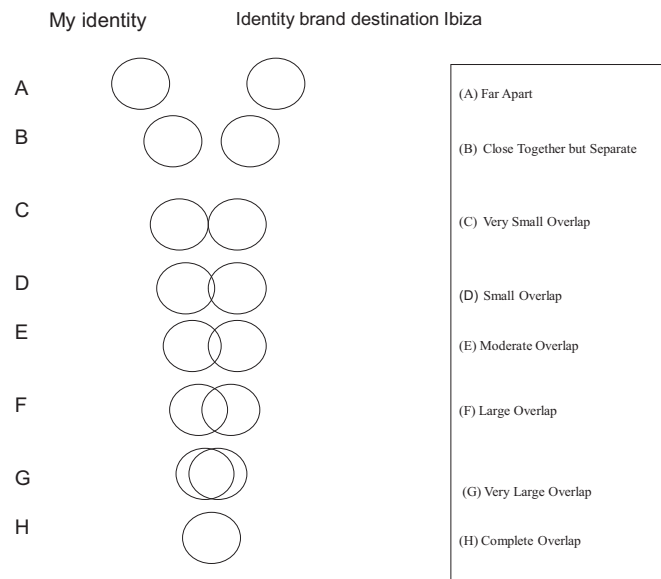


Fig. A1. Graphic Item cognitive component. Source: Adaptation by Bergami and Bagozzi (2000).

## Appendix A

See Fig. A1

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**Arturo Berrozpe** holds a Ph.D. in Economics & Business, UAM. From 2005 to 2012, he worked as an Assistant professor in the Department of Finance and Commercial Research of the UAM, where he taught a variety of general courses in Consumer Behavior. Since 2012 he is an Assistant Professor in Carlos III University Of Madrid. He has published books and articles in national and international journals such as *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*.



**Sara Campo** is an Associate Professor at the School of Business Administration of the Universidad Autónoma of Madrid (UAM). Currently she teaches the official subjects of “Marketing” in the UAM. She has published books and articles in several well-known international journals such as *Tourism Management*, *Journal of Travel Research*, *Tourism Economics*, *International Journal of Tourism Research*, *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, etc.



**María J. Yagüe** is Professor at the School of Business Administration of the Universidad Autónoma of Madrid (UAM). Currently she teaches the official subjects of “Marketing” in the UAM. She has published books and articles in several well-known international journals such as *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, *Journal of Travel Research*, *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, *European Journal of Marketing*, *International Journal of Market Research*, *Tourism Economics*, *International Journal of Culture*, etc.