



Research paper

Is asking only one member of a couple sufficient to determine who influences tourism decisions?

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ABSTRACT

Research on consumer behavior has laid considerable importance on identifying which member of a couple makes purchase decisions. However, numerous studies have relied solely on the response of one member, assuming that both are sufficiently in agreement, despite the lack of any clear support for this assumption of dyadic consensus. The aim of this study is to elucidate this question in tourism decisions, using a larger contemporary sample than those employed in other major studies. A further novelty of the study was to determine whether agreement could have been due to chance. Evidence was found of differences in the perception that each member of a couple had of the influence exerted. However, the degree of discrepancy between them depended on the aspect considered. The theoretical and practical implications of these findings are then discussed.

1. Introduction

The influence of family members, especially parents, on purchase decisions has received considerable research attention (Rojas-de-Gracia & Alarcón-Urbistondo, 2016). Three types of decision have been identified in the literature according to which member of a couple – whether married or not – exerts most influence: husband-dominant, wife-dominant, and joint (Davis & Rigaux, 1974). The first two indicate autonomous decisions, which are basically taken by one of the members, whereas a joint decision implies that both exert a similar influence (Litvin, Xu, & Kang, 2004).

Studies on this subject have often been based on the response of one member of the couple (Bokek-Cohen & Lissitsa, 2010; Kozak & Karadag, 2012; Wang, Chen, & Chou, 2007; Yin, Cai, & Yin, 2009). Not all of them have then extended their findings to the other member, but many have, even though Davis (1970) noted that obtaining a response from only one member of a couple might be methodologically problematic, affecting the reliability and validity of the data.

A smaller number of studies have collected more than one response per household, but nevertheless have based their analyses on the mean score for its members, assuming a high intrafamily correlation and therefore, a high level of agreement in perceptions of the influence exerted on family decision-making (Carrero & Aleti, 2017; Kenny, Kashy,

& Cook, 2006; Razzouk, Seitz, & Capo, 2007). However, several studies have confirmed Davis' (1970) suspicion, finding that when more than one response per household is obtained, these do not always show agreement, also called dyadic consensus (Godwin & Scanzoni, 1989; Gram, 2013; Julien, Bouchard, Gagnon, & Pomerleau, 1992; Lee & Beatty, 2002).

Heer (1963) defined dyadic consensus in a couple as the degree of agreement or disagreement in their perceptions of their relative influence in decision-making. As a result of Heer's study, the degree of consensus received greater attention in research on consumer behavior; however, such studies remain scarce and their conclusions have not obtained broad acceptance in the research community. Subsequently, this issue was largely forgotten as research turned to other, more popular questions, except in a few cases where consensus has been studied in a tangential manner (Carrero & Aleti, 2017; Penz & Kirchlner, 2016; Rojas-de-Gracia & Alarcón-Urbistondo, 2018; Rojas-de-Gracia, Alarcón-Urbistondo, & González-Robles, 2018).

The field of tourism is no exception, and the couple has often been considered as a unanimous decision-making unit. As a result, studies have often sought a response from only one member of a couple, usually the woman (Barlés-Arízón, Fraj-Andrés, & Matute-Vallejo, 2010; Green & Cunningham, 1975; Kerstetter & Pennington-Gray, 1999; Zalatan, 1998). However, the lack of studies on consensus in perceptions is even greater in the case of tourism decisions than for other

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types of product (Kang & Hsu, 2005; Rojas-de-Gracia & Alarcón-Urbistondo, 2016).

Given that some studies have indicated that the degree of consensus depends largely on the type of decision adopted (Burchinal & Bauder, 1965; Dunsing & Hafstrom, 1975; Wilkening & Morrison, 1963) and that tourism decisions present a series of unique aspects due to the financial and emotional risks involved (van Raaij, 1986), it seems necessary to revisit the subject of consensus. This would help obtain a more realistic picture of the role played by each member of a couple in tourism decisions, information that is fundamental for the design of persuasive marketing strategies for tourism firms. Thus, there is a need to determine if a single response per couple is representative of both members' perceptions. Consequently, the main objective of this study is to determine whether asking one member of a couple is sufficient to identify who influences tourism decisions, using a larger contemporary sample than those employed in other major studies. To achieve this general objective, five research questions were formulated in relation to the main aspects of dyadic consensus.

2. Literature review

Studies on consensus have basically examined four aspects: the difference between consensus at the aggregate level and by couple, the intensity and degree of within-couple consensus, the type of non-consensus, and the possible causes of non-consensus within couples.

2.1. Consensus at the aggregate level and by couple

Research on dyadic consensus has employed two approaches: aggregated and by couple. At the aggregate level, consensus is compared by considering study sample totals by sex, whereas consensus by couple compares the degree of agreement between the two members (Kang & Hsu, 2005). Most studies have reported few differences between male and female perceptions at the aggregate level (Burns, 1977; Kancheva & Marinov, 2014; Qualls, 1982; White & Johnson, 2001). However, less consensus has been found when comparing the perceptions of the two members of a couple (Godwin & Scanzoni, 1989; Gram, 2013; Lee & Beatty, 2002; Madrigal & Miller, 1996). Mohan (1995) noted that analyses at aggregate level can mask disagreement within couples and thus suggested that analyses should compare the responses of men and women within couples. In the light of this previous literature, the first research question is:

Research Question 1: Are there any significant differences in perception between the sexes?

2.2. Intensity and degree of consensus

In analyses of consensus at the individual level, cases of non-consensus have often been classified according to the degree of disagreement by subtracting the score for influence given by one member of a couple to the other from the score the other has awarded himself or herself. This difference has been used to establish high, moderate, and low levels of disagreement (Bronner & de Hoog, 2008; Davis & Rigaux, 1974; Douglas & Wind, 1978). However, regardless of the degree of disagreement obtained, most studies have simply calculated the percentage of couples whose perceptions coincide or differ with respect to the total sample analyzed.

Following this methodology, Davis (1970) estimated that between 25% and 50% of couples disagreed in their perception of influence in the purchase of furniture and cars. Davis and Rigaux (1974) calculated that between 10% and 50% of couples in the study sample showed a high level of disagreement regarding the influence exerted in the purchase of various consumer products and services. Burns (1977) and Munsinger, Weber, and Hansen (1975) also found that approximately

one-third of couples disagreed in their perception of influence in the purchase of various household products.

Studies on roles within couples when deciding on family vacations have reported a relatively higher percentage of couples whose perceptions coincide than for other products, ranging between 70% and 80% (Lee & Marshall, 2015; Litvin et al., 2004; Martínez-Salinas & Polo-Redondo, 1999; Xia et al., 2006). Nonetheless, there are some exceptions: for example, Barlés-Arizón, Fraj-Andrés, and Martínez-Salinas (2013a) found consensus in approximately 60% of couples. In addition, Bronner and de Hoog (2008) found evidence of low disagreement in more than 50% of couples and moderate disagreement in 25% of cases.

However, whether for tourism or other products, such percentages have not been calculated taking into account response agreement that may be due to chance. In other words, measurement of consensus has traditionally been too simplistic. Consequently, the second research question is:

Research Question 2: What degree of consensus exists between the perceptions of members of a couple when the effects of chance are considered?

Linked to this question, and given the absence of studies on the matter, a third research question was formulated:

Research Question 3: Is there a specific decision structure (husband-dominant, wife-dominant, and joint) which elicits greater consensus when agreement due to chance is taken into account?

2.3. Types of non-consensus

In an analysis of non-consensus within couples, Davis and Rigaux (1974) distinguished between the effect of 'modesty' and 'vanity'. The former occurs when one member of the couple overestimates the other's influence in a decision or underestimates his or her own influence. In contrast, vanity occurs when one member of the couple overestimates his or her own influence in a decision or underestimates the other's influence. Burns (1977) proposed a more comprehensive classification using nine categories that describe all possible cases in detail, as shown in Table 1.

According to this classification, there are three categories of consensus (husband-dominant, wife-dominant, and joint decision) and six categories of non-consensus. Vanity occurs when the vain member believes that he or she exerted sole influence, whereas his or her partner believes that it was a joint decision. In contrast, modesty occurs when one partner attributes all influence to the modest member, but the latter believes that the decision was joint. Meanwhile, a 'disputed role' occurs when both overestimate their own roles and view themselves as the main decision-makers, and a 'conceded role' occurs when both attribute sole influence to the other partner. Surprisingly, this categorization has rarely been used in other studies, despite its simplicity (White & Johnson, 2001).

Studies on the purchase of goods and services in general and of tourism products in particular have obtained inconclusive results re-

Table 1
Consensus and non-consensus classification of the responses of couples.
Source: Adapted by Burns (1977).

	Response of husbands		Response of wives	
	Husband-dominant	Joint	Husband-dominant	Wife-dominant
Husband-dominant	Agreed role	Vanity of man	Disputed role	
Joint	Modesty of woman	Agreed role	Vanity of woman	
Wife-dominant	Conceded role	Modesty of man	Agreed role	

garding cases of non-consensus, with some finding a tendency toward modesty (Bonfield, 1978; Burns, 1977), others toward vanity (Filiatrault & Ritchie, 1980; Kozak & Karadag, 2012), and still others toward both (Davis & Rigaux, 1974; Granbois & Willett, 1970; Rojas-de-Gracia & Alarcón-Urbistondo, 2018; Rojas-de-Gracia et al., 2018).

In view of these results, the fourth research question is:

Research Question 4: Do individuals tend to overestimate or underestimate their own influence in tourism decisions?

2.4. Causes of non-consensus

The real causes of non-consensus and the conditions under which it occurs are difficult to determine (Belch, Belch, & Ceresino, 1985; Booth & Welch, 1978; Davis & Rigaux, 1974) and only a few empirical studies have managed to identify some of the variables underlying disagreement. Several studies have related the tendency to overestimate or underestimate one's own influence (Blood & Heer, 1963; Burns & Hopper, 1986; Granbois & Willett, 1970) to resource theory, described by Blood and Wolfe (1960). For example, Burns and Hopper (1986) have argued that although this theory implicitly assumes that both members of a couple have the same perception of their contributions, their individual assessments of such contributions lead to an overestimation or underestimation of perceived influence. Other variables have also been studied, such as length of time together, age, social status, or the relationship between members of a couple, but without obtaining widely accepted conclusions (Granbois & Willett, 1970; Monroe, Bokemeier, Kotchen, & Mckean, 1985).

Although the specific variables underlying disagreement in perceptions of influence in a couple have yet to be identified, several theoretical explanations for non-consensus have been proposed. For example, Douglas and Wind (1978) established three causes: an ambiguous question regarding authority, difficulty remembering a past decision, and not knowing who was really responsible for a decision. In addition, Safilios-Rothschild (1969) observed that spouses' responses tend to reflect prevailing cultural norms and values concerning ideal family behavior, which can affect one member more than another, distorting his or her perception. In this respect, Heer (1963) argued that in studies on different roles in couples, men's perceptions are more accurate than women's because men do not feel guilty or inhibited about having or reporting greater influence, whereas women do. However, given the cultural changes that have taken place since Heer made this statement, his claim is now debatable.

In addition, Danes, Oswald, and Arce-de Esnaola (1998) proposed a theory based on the reasoning given by Hollerbach (1980). This latter indicated that decision-making in couples can be active or passive. Passive decisions occur when individuals or couples act according to internalized social norms. However, when one of them acts counter to social or cultural stereotypes, decision-making is active and there is a greater likelihood of communication in the couple to clarify the reasons for this divergence from expected behavior. Taking this idea as a starting point, Danes et al. (1998) suggested that responses coincide in passive decision-making, or in the case of active decision-making, following real communication and observation of who has participated.

Formulating more specific questions has been proposed as a possible solution to these biases (Corfman, 1989; Douglas & Wind, 1978; Labrecque & Ricard, 2001; Lee & Marshall, 2015). However, although Bonfield (1978) repeated the study by Davis and Rigaux (1974) using much more specific questions, similar levels of consensus were obtained. The use of observation techniques, for example in travel agencies, has also been suggested as a means to avoid the difficulties presented by questionnaires (Granbois & Willett, 1970; Lee & Marshall, 2002), but this solution has not been exempt from criticism either. For example, Dunsing and Hafstrom (1975) argued that just as self-reports reflect individual perceptions, so observers make judgments about the

behavior of respondents based on their own perception of the situation. In fact, Kenkel (1961) found that when the observer was a woman, wives tended to exert more influence than when the observer was a man.

Thus, given the lack of results on the explanatory variables of non-consensus, it seemed appropriate to investigate the reasons using variables that were easier to observe and interpret. These included sociodemographic and travel behavior variables, which are widely used in the literature on tourism (Rojas-de-Gracia & Alarcón-Urbistondo, 2016). Hence, the fifth and final research question is:

Research Question 5: Are sociodemographic and travel behavior variables sufficient to explain the existence of consensus in the perceptions of members of a couple?

3. Methodology

To achieve the objectives proposed in the present study, an empirical study was carried out with a sample of present-day couples who were thus living in a society with different values to those prevailing when many previous studies were conducted. The sample also exceeded the 80 dyad responses that Kenny et al. (2006) estimated as the typical sample size for this type of study, as well as being larger than that reported in high-impact publications on the subject, for example the 300 couples reported in Barlés-Arízón, Fraj-Andrés, and Martínez-Salinas (2013b). In addition, the aim of the proposed methodology was to go beyond a simple comparison of percentages of couples presenting consensus.

3.1. Sample characteristics

Given the many different types of couple, it considered necessary to restrict the study sample to a particular type: heterosexual couples, with at least one child in common aged between 10 and 18 years old, who will have accompanied them on the vacation analyzed. Children were included because this type of family constitutes a very important consumer for the tourism industry, and the couples' decisions affect their children as well as themselves (Durko & Petrick, 2013; Lehto, Lin, Chen, & Choi, 2012). In addition, the fact of having an adolescent son or daughter in common indicates that the couple's relationship is consolidated, so it can be assumed that the members of the couple know each other relatively well. Meanwhile, a vacation was defined as a trip outside the family home lasting at least three days, the main purpose of which was leisure (Gitelson & Crompton, 1984).

3.2. Questionnaire design

Prior to it being administered, the questionnaire was validated by six academic and professional experts on tourism. Subsequently, 30 couples completed a pre-test, which enabled any errors to be rectified. The resulting questionnaire, which each member of the couple completed separately, consisted of two parts. The first concerned sociodemographic variables and travel behavior, and the results are shown in Table 2.

The second part of the questionnaire asked about perceived influence in decision-making regarding certain aspects of the vacation. Attempting to be as specific as possible, participants were asked about the three stages of decision-making identified in many studies on tourism: initiation, search for information, and final decision (Belch et al., 1985; Belch & Willis-Flurry, 2002; Rojas-de-Gracia et al., 2018). In addition, participants were asked about the influence exerted in seven sub-decisions that have also received research attention: accommodation, activities, budget, date, destination, restaurants, and means of transport (Rojas-de-Gracia & Alarcón-Urbistondo, 2018; Wang et al., 2007; Wang, Hsieh, Yeh, & Tsai, 2004; Zalatan, 1998). Direct questions

Table 2
Sociodemographic and travel behavior data.

Type of variable	Variable	Categories	Couples (%)
			(100% = 375)
Sociodemographic	Family type	Traditional family	97.6
		Restructured family	2.4
	Type of couple union	Married in church	81.8
		Married in a registry office	13.1
		Not married	5.1
	Age difference	Same age	12.0
		Less than 5 years	69.3
		Between 5 and 10 years	16.1
		More than 10 years	2.6
	Employment status of man	Unemployed man	8.5
		Employed man	91.5
	Employment status of woman	Unemployed woman	39.4
		Employed woman	60.6
	Difference in educational level	Man has higher educational level	16.7
		Woman has higher educational level	26.3
		Same educational level	57.0
	Length of time living together	Less than 20 years	41.1
20 years or more		58.9	
Travel behavior	Purpose	Exclusively for leisure	81.6
		Visit family and friends	15.2
		Others	2.9
	Type of destination	Domestic	76.2
		International	23.8
	Frequency of vacations	Sporadic	21.3
		Every two or three years	25.1
		At least every year	53.6
	Travel group composition	Couple and children	85.3
		Couple, children and others	14.7
	Travel organization	Independent	85.6
		Agency	14.4

were used to measure influence in each of these aspects, as is common in this type of study (Madrigal & Miller, 1996), with the following response options: 'mainly my partner', 'mainly me', 'both of us', and 'someone else/nobody'.

3.3. Data collection

To obtain responses from men and women in the same couple, questionnaires were distributed in the 2016 school year to students at several public and private schools in different coastal and inland areas of Spain, who agreed to deliver them to their parents. In this way, 375 questionnaire dyads suitable for analysis were obtained. To overcome the problems entailed in convenience samples typical of this type of study and given the complexity of obtaining two responses per household, interviews were held with the students' tutors to clarify possible reasons for non-response. These stated that non-response was due to disinterest on the part of parents and/or children. Therefore, it did not indicate any kind of systematic bias, which would be the most problematic type of error. For more information on the data collected, see Authors (2019).

3.4. Data analysis techniques

To compare the responses of the father and mother dyad regarding perception of influence in the different stages and sub-decisions of the family vacation, traditional methods were combined with others that, while not novel, are rarely used in this field. First, an analysis of frequencies was performed to identify the roles played by family members. Frequencies were also used to construct feasibility triangles, positioning each aspect of a vacation decision in a specific place. Thus, the vertical axis indicates relative influence, where 1 indicates that this was mainly exerted by men, 2 that it was a joint decision, and 3 mainly by women. The horizontal axis indicates the percentage of couples who considered it a joint decision.

Hence, a joint decision is one that is close to 2 on the vertical axis but exceeds 50% on the horizontal axis, whereas an autonomous decision is close to 2 but does not exceed 50%. In this latter case, it is not possible to determine who was responsible for the decision because its proximity to 2 indicates that there was a similar proportion of husband-dominant decision (1) and wife-dominant decision (3) responses.

In line with the recommendations proposed by Kang and Hsu (2005), response consensus was analyzed both at the aggregate level and by couple. For the aggregate level analysis, Pearson's Chi-square test with contingency tables was used to determine whether there were differences in perceptions of the influence exerted in each stage and sub-decision according to the partner concerned.

To analyze consensus by couple, the percentages of dyads with agreement and disagreement between the two partners was estimated. Cohen's weighted kappa index was also used, which is more demanding than simple percentages. This index measures the agreement between two observers in their corresponding classifications of 'N' elements in 'C' mutually exclusive categories, and determines the extent to which the observed agreement is higher than what would be expected due to chance: the optimum value is close to 1 (Cohen, 1968). Since this is a weighted index, it also takes into account the degree of disagreement, distinguishing between a situation in which each member of a couple attributes sole influence to a different person, and another in which one of the members perceives the decision as having been made jointly whereas the other attributes it in its entirety to one person. The degree of disagreement would be lower in the latter case than in the former. The linear method was used to measure disagreement, which establishes a uniform gradient.

To investigate consensus by couple further, the Fleiss Kappa index was also calculated to determine in which category, in this case which type of decision (wife-dominant, husband-dominant, or joint), observers presented the highest degree of consensus (Fleiss, 1981). As with the weighted kappa index, the optimal value is close to 1, indicating the existence of consensus between observers.

In order to determine whether any sociodemographic and travel behavior variables were related to response agreement within a couple, an analysis was conducted using contingency tables. Each of the variables analyzed was compared in the tables with the existence or not of consensus, obtaining Pearson's Chi-square statistic to determine whether there was a relationship between the two.

4. Results

4.1. Perception of partner's influence in the stages and sub-decisions of family vacations

A good starting point to analyze consensus is to determine the perception of each member of a couple concerning the role he or she has played in the decision-making process. Table 3 shows the structure of the decision according to the influence in vacation decisions exerted by

Table 3
Influence on the stages and sub-decisions of family vacations.

	Husband-dominant		Joint		Wife-dominant		Total
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	
FATHER'S RESPONSE							
Accommodation	36	10.91	237	71.82	57	17.27	330
Activities	27	7.96	268	79.06	44	12.98	339
Budget	30	8.36	295	82.17	34	9.47	359
Date	39	11.78	253	76.44	39	11.78	331
Destination	47	13.54	232	66.86	68	19.60	347
Final decision	32	8.86	276	76.45	53	14.68	361
Initiation	46	13.94	203	61.52	81	24.55	330
Restaurants	27	8.39	266	82.61	29	9.01	322
Search of information	88	28.95	115	37.83	101	33.22	304
Transport	49	14.63	267	79.70	19	5.67	335
MOTHER'S RESPONSE							
Accommodation	32	9.97	229	71.34	60	18.69	321
Activities	27	8.01	261	77.45	49	14.54	337
Budget	27	7.58	293	82.30	36	10.11	356
Date	45	13.47	248	74.25	41	12.28	334
Destination	42	12.10	236	68.01	69	19.88	347
Final decision	29	8.15	273	76.69	54	15.17	356
Initiation	50	15.29	200	61.16	77	23.55	327
Restaurants	24	7.52	270	84.64	25	7.84	319
Search of information	84	28.09	120	40.13	95	31.77	299
Transport	44	13.21	268	80.48	21	6.31	333

one or both members of a couple. Figs. 1 and 2 show feasibility triangles according to the perception of men and women, respectively.

The results indicate that all the stages and sub-decisions analyzed presented a joint structure, except the search for information. Of particular note were decisions related to the choice of restaurants, budget, and transport, with percentages close to or higher than 80% of couples analyzed, according to both samples. Decisions that were joint to a lesser extent concerned initiation and choice of destination, with percentages below 70%. Despite presenting a score close to 2 on the vertical axis, the search for information was an autonomous decision. This was because a similar proportion of responses indicated that it was wife-dominant and husband-dominant (28.95% vs. 33.22% [$p = .254$] according to the sample of fathers and 28.09% vs. 31.77% [$p = .327$] according to the sample of mothers), without significant differences be-

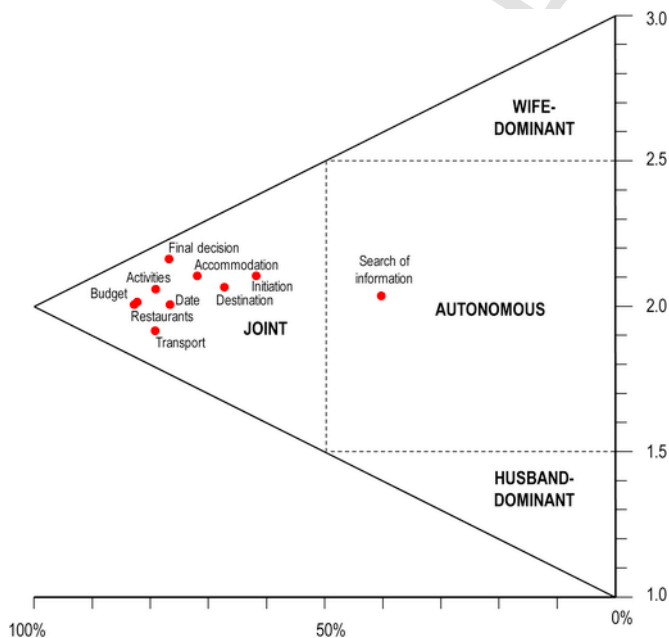


Fig. 1. Feasibility triangle of stages and sub-decisions according to men.

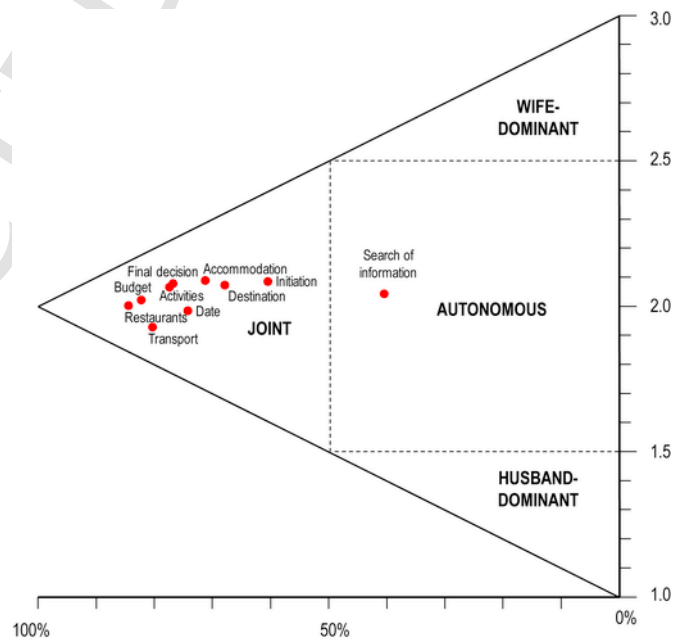


Fig. 2. Feasibility triangle of stages and sub-decisions according to women.

tween the proportions in either of the samples. However, this analysis is merely descriptive and does not permit the study of couple consensus in decision-making, which requires another, additional type of analysis.

4.2. Consensus at aggregate level

The next step in analyzing consensus was to study the same at aggregate level in order to answer the first research question by verifying whether consensus at aggregate level is high and therefore does not present differences between the sexes. As Table 4 shows, an analysis of consensus regarding the partner's influence at aggregate level, considering men and women as groups, revealed no differences in their perception of decision-making for the different aspects analyzed. However,

Table 4
Consensus on the perception of influence at an aggregate level.

Stage/Sub-decision	Chi-square of Pearson	Degree of freedom	Asymptotic bilateral significance
Accommodation	.325	2	.850
Activities	.356	2	.837
Budget	.209	2	.901
Date	.486	2	.784
Destination	.322	2	.851
Final decision	.138	2	.933
Initiation	.277	2	.871
Restaurants	.513	2	.774
Search of information	.342	2	.843
Transport	.365	2	.833

this type of analysis does not elucidate what consensus between members of a couple really is.

4.3. Consensus at individual level

In order to verify whether consensus at aggregate level masked differences in perception between men and women, consensus at individual level was analyzed by means of the percentages of couples whose answers coincided. Using the classification proposed by Burns (1977), levels of agreement by couple were over 80%, except for choice of destination, at 79.7% (see Table 5). Of particular note was the agreement in perception of influence in means of transport (87.4%), restaurants (87.4%), and vacation activities (87.0%). These results did not clearly indicate whether the aggregate analysis masked a lack of consensus within couples. However, it should be noted that these percentages do not reflect agreement due to chance. Therefore, the second and third research questions remain unanswered.

Nonetheless, the percentages calculated according to Burns' classification (1977) do permit an analysis of whether the effects of modesty or vanity are characteristic of one sex in particular, which was the fourth research question. Disagreement never exceeded 13% of couples.

Table 5
Percentage of couples with consensus on the perception of influence.

Stage/Sub-decision	Joint	Husband-dominant	Wife-dominant	Total
Accommodation	63.8	7.3	12.4	83.5
Activities	72.6	4.9	9.5	87.0
Budget	76.0	4.3	5.4	85.7
Date	67.4	8.7	7.1	83.2
Destination	57.8	8.3	13.6	79.7
Final decision	69.2	4.8	9.1	83.1
Initiation	55.0	9.4	18.8	83.2
Restaurants	77.9	4.6	4.9	87.4
Search of information	33.0	25.1	27.8	85.9
Transport	74.1	9.3	4.0	87.4

Table 6
Percentage of couples with non-consensus on the perception of influence.

Stage/Sub-decision	Vanity of man	Vanity of woman	Modesty of man	Modesty of woman	Disputed role	Conceded role	Total
Accommodation	2.9	5.7	4.4	2.2	1.0	0.3	16.5
Activities	2.8	4.6	3.1	1.5	0.3	0.6	13.0
Budget	3.4	4.0	3.1	2.0	0.6	1.1	14.3
Date	2.5	4.7	3.4	4.0	0.9	1.2	16.8
Destination	4.7	5.6	5.6	2.9	0.9	0.6	20.3
Final decision	2.6	4.6	4.8	2.8	1.7	0.3	16.9
Initiation	2.8	3.4	3.4	3.1	1.6	2.5	16.8
Restaurants	3.3	2.9	3.6	2.3	0.3	0.3	12.6
Search of information	3.1	3.1	3.1	1.4	1.7	1.7	14.1
Transport	5.2	1.5	1.2	3.7	0.6	0.3	12.6

ples, but when it did occur, the vanity effect was greater in women (see Table 6). In contrast, the modesty effect predominated in men. There were only two exceptions to this general rule. The first was choice of transport, where men attributed more influence to themselves than that assigned them by their partners, and women less than that assigned them by their partners. The second concerned budget decisions, whereby both presented a vanity effect. In short, it cannot be said that there was a general tendency among individuals, regardless of sex, to underestimate or overestimate their own influence in tourism decisions, since these results indicate that women tended to present vanity and men, modesty.

In order to take into account agreement that might be due to chance, Cohen's weighted kappa index was calculated using the linear method, as shown in Table 7. This index is usually interpreted following the guidelines proposed by Altman (1991), adapted from Landis and Koch (1977), according to which an index lower than 0.2 indicates that consensus is negligible; between 0.2 and 0.4 that it is poor; between 0.4 and 0.6 that it is moderate; between 0.6 and 0.8 that it is good; and over 0.8 indicates excellent consensus. In line with these guidelines, an analysis of the index showed that in general, despite the high percentages of agreement between the fathers' and mothers' responses, only decisions about accommodation, activities, initiation, transport, and above all, the search for information presented high levels of consensus. When responses on the budget, the date, the destination, the final decision, and restaurants were compared, the level of consensus was merely moderate. This therefore answers the second research question regarding the level of consensus when the effect of agreement due to chance is taken into account. The results show that although not all aspects of tourism decision-making between a couple presented the same degree of consensus, it could not be said that there was high agreement in general. Irrespective of the above, the level of consensus shown according to this analysis was lower than that indicated by the percentage calculation.

Meanwhile, to answer the third research question regarding the possible existence of a decision structure that elicited greater consensus, the Fleiss kappa index was calculated. As shown in Table 8, no one type of decision elicited a clearer level of consensus than another, since only small differences in index values were obtained. Nevertheless, in general, consensus was more probable in the case of joint or wife-dominant decision rather than husband-dominant decisions. This could indicate that the latter were identified with less clarity.

4.4. Characteristics of couples presenting consensus

The fifth research question concerned the role of sociodemographic and travel behavior variables as possible causes of consensus. Table 9 shows the results of an analysis conducted using contingency tables, although only variables with at least one significant relationship for consensus in a stage or sub-decision are shown. As can be seen, the patterns of consensus between responses were very difficult to determine.

Table 7
Cohen's weighted kappas with linear weights.

Stage/Sub-decision	Cohen's weighted kappa	Interval	Concordance level
Accommodation	.633***	.6-.8	Good
Activities	.634***	.6-.8	Good
Budget	.504***	.4-.6	Moderate
Date	.572***	.4-.6	Moderate
Destination	.598***	.4-.6	Moderate
Final decision	.540***	.4-.6	Moderate
Initiation	.659***	.6-.8	Good
Restaurants	.550***	.4-.6	Moderate
Search of information	.794***	.6-.8	Good
Transport	.617***	.6-.8	Good

*** $p < .001$.

Only two variables were found that presented slight trends in an analysis of the type of relationship. The first of these was type of family. Thus, the results indicated that couples in traditional families (i.e. which did not include children from previous relationships) showed a higher level of consensus than couples in blended families. The second variable was the composition of the travel group, whereby couples traveling with other people besides their children showed greater consensus in their responses. In view of these results, it cannot be said that sociodemographic characteristics or travel behavior are explanatory causes of consensus. Nevertheless, considering the number of variables that presented a statistically significant relationship (two sociodemographic compared with four behavioral variables), the results suggest that sociodemographic variables are less suitable than behavioral variables for determining, a priori, consensus between responses.

Table 8
Fleiss's kappas for individual categories.

Stage/Sub-decision	Husband-dominant		Joint		Wife-dominant	
	Fleiss' kappa	Concordance level	Fleiss' kappa	Concordance level	Fleiss' kappa	Concordance level
Accommodation	.662***	Good	.627***	Good	.614***	Good
Activities	.625***	Good	.643***	Good	.639***	Good
Budget	.507***	Moderate	.569***	Moderate	.502***	Moderate
Date	.617***	Good	.614***	Good	.524***	Moderate
Destination	.591***	Moderate	.571***	Moderate	.602***	Good
Final decision	.526***	Moderate	.586***	Moderate	.548***	Moderate
Initiation	.594***	Moderate	.730***	Good	.702***	Good
Restaurants	.562***	Moderate	.554***	Moderate	.538***	Moderate
Search of information	.808***	Excellent	.775***	Good	.781***	Good
Transport	.595***	Moderate	.634***	Good	.665***	Good

*** $p < .001$.

Table 9
Variables related to consensus.

Stage/Sub-decision	Sociodemographic		Travel behavior			
	Family type	Type of couple union	Type of destination	Frequency of vacation	Travel group composition	Travel organization
Accommodation	1.252	3.032	.010	.444	.013	3.144
Activities	.076	.991	2.427	1.045	.255	.483
Budget	4.762*	2.004	.011	.768	3.271	.000
Date	1.866	.101	.035	3.496	4.254*	.146
Destination	3.312	6.985*	3.176	.446	1.938	.724
Final decision	.707	2.772	5.997*	2.508	1.478	4.088*
Initiation	.403	.456	.292	6.561*	4.369*	.105
Restaurants	12.756***	.051	2.781	2.989	.019	.210
Search of information	2.822	1.738	.558	3.820	.462	.753
Transport	.017	.142	.000	.634	1.824	1.342

* $p < .05$.

*** $p < .001$.

Notes: Only variables with at least one significant relationship appear.

5. Discussion

In general, the results for the influence exerted in the different stages and sub-decisions analyzed coincide with those reported in the literature, except in the case of budget decisions, since numerous studies have reported that men dominate budget decisions and other financial aspects (Belch et al., 1985; Kang & Hsu, 2005; Wang et al., 2007; Zalatan, 1998). However, the present study confirms the results obtained in other studies indicating that couples adopt this decision jointly (Barlés-Arizona et al., 2013a; Burns, 1977; Harcar, Spillan, & Kucukemiroglu, 2005). Although further research is required, it is possible that women are attaining levels of equality in areas of decision-making that were traditionally considered the exclusive domain of men.

The search for information was the only aspect that was not identified as a joint decision, but it also presented the highest level of within-couple consensus. One possible explanation could be that it entails physical activity, such as searching the internet or asking family or friends, as has already been found in other studies (Douglas & Wind, 1978; Quarm, 1981; Rojas-de-Gracia & Alarcón-Urbistondo, 2018; Rojas-de-Gracia et al., 2018). Thus, as suggested by Quarm (1981), it may have been easier for respondents to identify the person carrying out the search than to identify who had carried out purely cognitive activities such as making the final decision.

Taken together with the finding that joint decisions formed the category presenting the most consensus, the results of this study seem to support the theory of active and passive decision-making (Danes et al., 1998; Hollerbach, 1980). Thus, the level of consensus will be greater when responses indicate a socially desirable pattern of behavior (decid-

ing together) or concern an easily observable action (search for information).

Meanwhile, the absence of differences in responses by sex at aggregate level coincides with the findings reported in other studies (Burns, 1977; Davis & Rigaux, 1974; Kancheva & Marinov, 2014; White & Johnson, 2001). However, as noted by Mohan (1995), aggregate analyses can mask possible within-couple disagreement, as indeed was found in the present study. Although the percentages of couples whose responses coincided were higher than those found in previous studies (Dellaert, Prodigalidad, & Louviere, 1998; Lee & Marshall, 2015; Litvin et al., 2004; Xia et al., 2006), always exceeding 80% except in the case of choice of destination, the results changed once agreement that may have been due to chance was taken into account. While high consensus existed for half of the aspects analyzed, the rest only presented moderate consensus. This suggests that the high percentages of consensus displayed by couples should be interpreted with caution.

With respect to type of non-consensus, the results coincide with those reported in other studies which identified more than one pattern (Davis & Rigaux, 1974; Granbois & Willett, 1970; Rojas-de-Gracia & Alarcón-Urbistondo, 2018; Rojas-de-Gracia et al., 2018); thus, the vanity effect predominated among women while the modesty effect prevailed among men. This result runs counter to Heer's (1963) suggestion that women feel more inhibited than men about reporting greater influence. Although this may have been true at the time, the results indicate that women have gained greater social equality since then.

No variables were identified that clearly helped to determine the causes of non-consensus. This may be because consensus was distributed randomly among the couples analyzed or because the real causes of consensus were not being measured. In this respect, the findings do not confirm reports in other studies suggesting that in general, when women work outside the home and contribute resources, there is a greater likelihood of communication in decision-making processes and hence of greater consensus (Danes et al., 1998; Scanzoni, 1980; Stinnet, Knaug, O'Neal, & Walters, 1983). In fact, the results provide support for another theory whereby rather than seeking the causes for consensus in sociodemographic variables or even trip behavior, these should be sought in variables related specifically to within-couple communication or to the quality of the marital relationship (Bokemeier & Monroe, 1983; Danes et al., 1998; Yoshioka, 1984).

6. Conclusions

Demographic and social changes have transformed couples' decision-making processes in all areas. This new context explains the need to update research on tourist decision-making. For example, it is particularly important to study consensus in perceptions of the influence exerted by members of a couple, a subject that has largely been forgotten in the literature and on which there are no conclusive results.

This study confirms that at present, there is a lack of consensus, and therefore it is insufficient to ask one member of a couple to identify who exerts the most influence in tourism decisions. This finding was obtained using a more rigorous methodology than those employed to date, which have been based on a simple comparison of percentages without taking into account agreement due to chance. In addition, a much larger sample than is usually the case in this type of study was studied.

The results further indicate that differences in perception varied depending on the aspect analyzed. In particular, half of the aspects related to the decisions analyzed only presented a moderate level of consensus, indicating the absence of general consensus. Nonetheless, it should be noted that seeking information for the vacation, which is the aspect that most clearly involves a physical task, was the one which

obtained the highest levels of consensus. The results also indicate that sociodemographic variables and travel behavior data are insufficient to explain lack of consensus in couples.

In short, given that decision-making roles between members of a couple are not clear, the results of this study confirm that tourism decisions are difficult to explain solely in terms of sex. If this were the case, couples would probably have a clearer perception of who had exerted the greatest influence, either because each member played the expected roles, or because by not playing them, the implied 'transgression' would be easily perceived by both. Nonetheless, a study of the influence of members of a couple in tourism decisions continues to constitute an interesting subject, given that clear identification of decision-makers would render it possible to explore not only their sex but also their motivations, attitudes, and other characteristics.

Besides using a convenience sample, the main limitation of this study is that it did not consider the influence exerted by children or other people forming part of the travel group. To obtain a fuller picture of family vacation decision-making, it would be necessary to consider all the agents involved in the process.

The main implications of the study are methodological. First, the results call into question the validity and reliability of the conclusions reached in many previous studies that despite only obtaining one response per household, have extrapolated results to both members of the couple. Consequently, as possible future areas of research, more studies could be conducted that include two responses in order to compare the results obtained in both samples, since although this would not rectify the error, it would highlight the differences in perceptions. This would enable strongly supported identification of the aspects that give rise to a higher level of disagreement, for subsequent investigation of the causes.

As a result of the above, the second methodological implication is the need to reformulate research on family decisions in order to clearly identify the decision-maker. For example, studies should include observers outside the couple who have witnessed the decision-making process. Including third persons in studies on dyadic consensus would yield the perceptions of people who, a priori, were more impartial. Likewise, techniques other than questionnaires could be used, such as projective methods, which allow individuals to better visualize the situations posed before giving their response.

The lack of a clear identification of who assumes the role of decision-maker in tourism also has practical implications. For example, the differing perceptions of members of a couple oblige companies to target both sexes in their marketing strategies, because as Riest and Trout (1993) have noted, marketing works in consumers' minds, not on shop shelves. This is especially important in the design of communication campaigns. Normally, advertising discourses deploy the stereotypes assumed by the recipients, so that these see themselves reflected and perceive the messages in a context they find credible and pleasing. Hence, if a traditional medium such as television is used, the message must target both members, as a family unit, or differentiated messages must be designed if indicated by the target audience of the program, but without neglecting either of them. However, in the new technological era, messages can be channeled and designed in a personalized manner so that each member of a couple identifies with a message that reinforces his or her role as perceived decision-maker. This would encompass everything from the influencers who must be used to the storytelling on which the advertisement is based.

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Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data to this article can be found online at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2019.03.005>.

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