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Motivations and constraints for the ghost tourism: A case study in Spain

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Ghost tourism is emerging in numerous destinations all around world. This paper examines the motivations for participating in ghost tourism using the push-pull theory; and analyzes how motivations and constraints may influence the intention to participate in ghost tourism in Spain. Data were collected from 177 domestic tourists in Córdoba (Spain). An exploratory factor analysis revealed two push motivation dimensions and three pull motivation dimensions. Using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), the results showed that the search for novelty and emotional experience (push motivation) and the organization of ghost tours (pull motivation) are key incentives for the behavioural intention. Moreover, among the constraints analyzed, only the intrapersonal constraint significantly affects tourists' intentions.

Keywords: push-pull motivation; constraint; behavioural intention; ghost tour; paranormal tourism

1. Introduction

Ghost tours are emerging in numerous destinations all around world (Gentry, 2007; Holloway, 2010; Krisjanous & Carruthers, 2018; McEvoy, 2016). Their growing popularity is attributed to an increased interest in the paranormal (Davies, 2007). Nowadays, there are different destinations where ghost tourism has been developed and well-established, particularly in the USA –with numerous ghost tours from New Orleans (Louisiana) to Gettysburg (Pennsylvania)– and the UK –with popular ghost tours in Edinburgh (Scotland), London, Manchester or York (England)– (McEvoy, 2016).

This research focuses on Western contemporary destinations, in particular in Spain. In places with other cultures, such as Asian destinations, ghost belief is strongly

supported (Rittichainuwat, 2011). However, in Western societies, where the decrease in organized religious affiliation and the rules and values towards scientific rationalism encourage disbelief in ghosts (Inglis & Holmes, 2003; Reisinger, 2003), paranormal experiences are somewhat contradictory. Nevertheless, stories of paranormal experiences are still common (Alfano, 2005; Castro et al., 2014) and the belief in paranormal phenomena and ghosts seems to have increased in the last decades (Holzhauser, 2015).

Due to the growing interest in the paranormal, many Western countries such as Spain, Portugal or Germany, among others, have started to promote the most mysterious aspects of their histories to attract paranormal tourists (Blankshein, 2012). In Spain, the image of the country as a tourist destination is ruled by sea, sun and sand, in spite of having other attractive elements, including a rich history related to the paranormal (Rodríguez, 2012). Among the growing diversity of tourism activities, ghost tours have recently emerged with the aim to become a tourism niche, and consequently ghost tourism is flourishing in some places of the country.

For a successful development of this type of tourism, in Spain and in other countries where ghost tourism is in its first stages of development, the understanding of both motivations and constraints for the participation of potential tourists is critical. Knowing the motivations of tourists is essential to create an offer to meet tourists' requirements. Furthermore, it is also important to identify constraints, that is, reasons why people are prevented from or inhibited in their participation in an activity (Hawkins et al., 1999). Nevertheless, exploring motivations or constraints alone only allows to get a partial understanding of the visits to destinations with ghost tours. It is necessary to explore individual's behavioural intention, as it has direct influence on their current behaviour (Line et al., 2010).

Academic literature on paranormal tourism in general, and ghost tourism in particular, is scarce, and empirical data are very limited (Pharino et al., 2018). In this context, there is a lack of attempts to clarify tourists' motivations, restrictions and intentions to visit destinations with ghost tours from an approach of paranormal tourism. Specifically, few studies discuss the motivation of tourists to participate in ghost tourism (Ironsides, 2018; Ivanova & Light, 2018; Singleton, 2017; Thompson, 2008, 2010), and no research explores motivations using the push-pull framework or restrictions in the context of paranormal tourism. In addition, to the best of our knowledge, no study provides empirical evidence of the role of motivations and constraints on the behavioral intentions of ghost tourists. In this light, this paper aims: 1) to determine the motivations for participating in ghost tourism using the push-pull theory; 2) to analyze how push and pull motivations and constraints may influence the intention of potential tourists to participate in this type of tourism. The results of this study will improve the understanding of ghost tourism consumption.

2. Literature review

2.1. Ghost tourism

Ghost tourism is a type of special interest tourism. The term "ghost" refers to the spirit of a dead person that appears to a living person (Oxford Dictionary, 1988). There is a theoretical debate in the literature concerning the differences between the terms "ghost" and "spirit"; nevertheless, both words are frequently used interchangeably to refer to the soul of a deceased person (Comaroff, 2007; Yang et al., 2008).

Ghost tourism is based on tourists' interest in ghosts (Thompson, 2010), and can be defined as travelling to places where the appearance or perception of ghosts has been attributed. Ghost tourism includes participation in ghost tours, ghost hunting or

investigative tours. However, the most common type of ghost tourism is the participation in ghost tours (Holloway, 2010).

Since the appearance or perception of ghosts is a paranormal belief and phenomenon, ghost tourism is considered a subcategory of paranormal tourism. Paranormal tourism lies in the interest about topics that challenge realist ontologies and representational epistemologies (Pharino et al., 2018). However, ghost tourism can also be seen as an expansion of other types of tourism, such as dark tourism, spiritual tourism, religious tourism and pilgrimage tourism (Pharino, et al., 2018). Figure 1 shows the relationships between these concepts. At times, several interests may overlap or intersect in ghost tourism destinations. Those tourists that are interested in ghosts may be accompanied by people who may also have interest in spiritual purposes and beliefs detached from religious institutions, or who are interested in visiting historic temples or churches, or in going in pilgrimage to sacred sites with religious purposes. Moreover, the interest in ghosts and in places where tragic deaths have occurred is associated to dark tourism, where the sites are associated with death, disaster and the suffering of the macabre (Lennon & Foley, 1999; Sharpley & Stone, 2009). Occasionally, both in dark tourism and in spiritual tourism can be elements related to the paranormal, but what distinguishes paranormal tourism is the basic interest in paranormal phenomena that challenge scientific explanations (Pharino, et al., 2018).

[Figure 1 near here]

Several studies have examined different elements of ghost tourism as a form of dark tourism (Bristow, 2020; Dancausa et al., 2019; Gentry, 2007; Heidelberg, 2015; Holloway, 2010; Ironside, 2018; Ivanova & Light, 2018; Krisjanous & Carruthers,

2018; Lacanienta et al., 2020; Powell & Iankova, 2016; Rahmawati, 2016; Rodriguez, 2012; Stone, 2009; White, 2013). For his part, Singleton (2017) refers to ghost tourism as a type of spiritual tourism. Other studies (Bucior, 2019; Houran et al., 2020; Thompson, 2008, 2010; Pharino et al., 2018; Pharino & Pearce, 2019), however, analyze ghost tourism from an approach of paranormal tourism. Among them, Ironside (2018), Ivanova and Light (2018), Singleton (2017) and Thompson (2008, 2010) analyzed tourists' motivations using a qualitative research methodology. Motivations are essentials to understand why individuals travel and get involved in a specific activity (Pearce, 2005). In this study motivations are analyzed using the push-pull framework, which is generally accepted as a key approach to understand tourists' decision-making processes.

2.2. Push-pull motivations

Although the push-pull framework is widely used to examine tourist motivations (Klenosky, 2002), no research has applied this theory into the context of ghost tourism or paranormal tourism. Push motivations are internal social-psychological forces, which generate desire to travel (e.g. desire to relaxation) (Klenosky, 2002). Pull motivations are, however, external forces generated by attributes of the destination or tourist product as perceived by potential tourists (e.g. beaches) that can strengthen inherent push factors, and stimulate individuals to visit a particular destination or to get involved in a specific activity (Kim et al., 2003; Klenosky, 2002).

Consequently, the combination of both push and pull motivations determines the decision of tourists to participate in a ghost tour. Push motivations explain the desire to participate in ghost tourism, while pull motivations are useful to explain the choice of a particular destination or ghost tour.

2.2.1. Push motivations to participate in ghost tourism

People can be pushed to participate in ghost tourism due to different reasons. According to Thompson (2008), that examines ghost tours in Gettysburg, tourists participate in ghost tours in part to have an authentic experience of the paranormal, to learn something about it through their own experience (authenticity seekers), and to have fun (pleasure seekers). Against their better judgment and in a scientifically rationalized society, individuals seek out a sense of mystery that comes from an experience with the paranormal (Blankshein, 2012; Thompson, 2010). Tours are based on the idea that ghosts make a conscious effort to show themselves, allowing the world of living to perceive them. This perception can be obtained through different senses. This way, in ghost tours, the tourists can play with their senses, opening their minds to consider that, for example, a sound or odor could be an encounter with a ghost. The surer the individuals are regarding the possibility of experiencing a ghost, the more exciting the tour. Nevertheless, although tourists desire to experience the emotion to have a direct encounter with the paranormal during the tour, tourists do not demand it, as they understand that such an experience is unlikely. In this light, it is enough that tourists consider the possibility that they may encounter a ghost during the tour (Thompson, 2008).

According to Ironside (2018), who interviews ghost hunting and tours participants and organizers in UK, ghost tourism offers a unique way to explore mortality and spirituality issues. As specified by the mortality mediation thesis (Stone & Sharpley, 2008), contemporary societies, which have also witnessed a decrease in organized religion, have less and less mechanisms to confront death. As a result, people participate in ghost tourism as it allows them to reflect on and contemplate the nature of mortality. However, according to Ivanova and Light (2018), that explore motives for

visiting the London Dungeon, rather than an interest in death, some tourists show an interest in horror and the macabre, some as an extension of their interest in horror films, and others as an extension of their interest in the dark side of history. In fact, many tourists specifically deny having any particular interest in death.

Ironside (2018) states that through ghost tours tourists can explore questions of spiritual significance in an unconventional way, trying to find some sort of meaning to life. Furthermore, the possibility of actually having a ghostly encounter affords participants the possibility of affirming deep questions, as it would be proof of some form of life after death, and validating “strange” experiences that they have previously lived through. Something that can be scary and, at the same time, exciting. For those individuals whose minds are open to the possibilities of the paranormal, ghost tours also offer a sense of community, as they can meet other people who also believe in the existence of ghosts (Seeman, 2002).

Another reason to take ghost tours can be the interest in learning and understanding past events, history and heritage. In some cases, even though stories include fictional elements or are entertainment-oriented, ghost tours provide an educative presentation based on the history of past events, so that visitors can engage with the themes and stories in a deeper way (Gentry, 2007; Holloway, 2010; Ivanova & Light, 2018). In other cases, the stories are not only based on real facts, but actors in the ghost-tourism industry see ghost stories as a more reliable tool for knowing the past, and teaching it to visitors, than authorized heritage (Bucior, 2019). Moreover, following Ironside (2018), ghost tours present an opportunity to consider or learn moral lessons from ghost stories.

In addition, when people participate in ghost tours, they know tour performance may cause fear and even disturbances (Rodríguez, 2012). In line with the affirmations

of Nawijn et al. (2016) in relation to dark destinations, however, expecting a negative emotional response (e.g. fear) may be a trigger to take ghost tours. In this respect, in attractions such as the London Dungeon, some visitors reported to seek thrills and playful experiences which were slightly scary (Ivanova & Light, 2018). Likewise, Holloway (2010) suggested a similar association between entertainment, fears and emotions in the context of ghost tours across the UK.

Finally, according to previous studies (Ivanova & Light, 2018; Rodríguez, 2012; Thompson, 2010), tourists participate in ghost tours more for entertainment or general or incidental motives, than for other reasons. Incidental or general motives include curiosity, desire to have a new experience or visit an unusual place, desire for leisure, a way of sharing time with friends or relatives, serendipity or the fact that the tour is included in an organized itinerary (Holzhauser, 2015; Ivanova & Light, 2018; Rahmawati, 2016; Rodríguez, 2012; Singleton, 2017; Thompson, 2008). Nevertheless, Houran et al. (2020), when surveying ghost tour operators in the USA, suggest that ghost tourism tend to have both tourists who spontaneously participate in attractions and tourists who apparently preplan their participation.

2.2.2. Pull motivations to choose a ghost tour

People can be attracted to take a ghost tour because of a number of attributes that make one more appealing than others. The review of the literature shows that these attributes can be very diverse.

Ghost tours traditionally follow a guided walking route, where ghost stories are told while stopping at relevant landmarks (Holloway, 2010; Rodríguez, 2012; Seeman, 2002; Thompson, 2008). The visitation to spooky or bewitched places, where the presence of ghosts is attributed, is an essential component (Rodríguez, 2012; Thompson, 2008). These spooky places are usually located in historical cities,

cemeteries, castles, mansions, asylums, prisons, hospitals, homesteads, schools... (Houran et al., 2020). Tours are around two hours in length, and whenever possible these tours take place in the evening or at night, when it is dark (Krisjanous & Carruthers, 2018; Rodríguez, 2012; Seeman, 2002; Thompson, 2008). This is a key factor, as darkness immediately entails intensification of senses and personal emotions (Hill, 2011). Other factors, in addition, such as the silence, the physical environment (winding paths, cobbled streets, ancient buildings or creaky floorboards) and the story of the visited site help create a spooky atmosphere (Ironsides, 2018; Rahmawati, 2016; Thompson, 2010).

Another relevant factor is the approach of the ghost tour (Rodríguez, 2012; Thompson, 2008). Some ghost tours are presented in a serious tone, outlining its historic value and the expertise of the tour guide, aiming only at adults, using a more complex language, explaining and playing psychophonies, etc. Other ghost tours, however, are less serious, fun, almost comical, aimed at families, and promise tourists the spook of fright they are seeking, with actors playing ghosts, theatrical performances or scenes, guides wearing costumes and props, special effects and fictional elements (Holzhauser, 2015; Krisjanous, 2016; Rodríguez, 2012; Stone, 2009). According to Thompson (2008), a central entertainment of a ghost tour is the use of humor as an important aspect of the performance. Humor allows guides to adopt a liminal position of both entertainer and paranormal enthusiast. In other cases, however, the guides take a more serious role, as experts in paranormal matters, and even as mediums (Rahmawati, 2016). Furthermore, tour guides are certainly an important factor, as their training and skills in storytelling are essentials (Holloway, 2010; Keller, 2010; Krisjanous & Carruthers, 2018; Rodríguez, 2012; Thompson, 2008). People love good stories, and these stories have a great impact on people (Kužnik & Veble, 2018). Hill et al. (2018)

describe the branding power or sociocultural influence of these narratives in terms of five features that define their VAPUS model: versatility, adaptability, participatory nature, universality and scalability. This model describes cognitive-affective factors that likely help ghost tourism to be successful.

Another key factor is the paranormal encounter, which can range from its materialization through actors disguised as ghosts or the use of special effects, to the predisposition of tourists to play with their senses to perceive ghosts, the possibility of take photos in places where it is believed that their presence could be captured, the reproduction of psychophonies or the participation of a medium (Rahmawati, 2016; Thompson, 2008).

Finally, people can be attracted to take a ghost tour because of its notoriety arising from its appearance on media (Hill, 2011; Holloway, 2010; Houran et al., 2020).

Once the push and pull factors are known, it is essential to identify those elements that may act as constraints to participate in ghost tourism.

2.3. Potential constraints

Among the different theories on leisure constraints or barriers, hierarchical model of leisure constraints is one of the most widely used, and it has a great potential to shed light on travel behaviour (Nyaupane & Andereck, 2008). In this model, Crawford and Godbey (1987) classify leisure barriers into three types: a) intrapersonal barriers (e.g. lack of interest) that have an influence on preference formation; b) interpersonal barriers (e.g. other relatives' and/or friends' preferences, with whom they could participate in a tourist activity) that affect preferences and participation; and c) structural barriers (e.g. limited budget) that interfere between a preference for an activity and the actual participation in that activity.

Later, Crawford et al. (1991) suggested that these barriers have a hierarchy. Firstly, a person finds restrictions at the intrapersonal level. Secondly, after overcoming these barriers, individuals can find constraints at the interpersonal level. Finally, and only when interpersonal barriers are also overcome, structural restrictions appear.

Among the intrapersonal constraints, the most widely experienced reason for not participating in an activity is the psychological barrier of lack of interest (Zhang et al., 2012, 2016). In ghost tourism, an important variable that needs to be taken into account among intrapersonal constraints could be thus the interest of a potential tourist in mysterious events, paranormal phenomena, and activities related to them. The goal is to analyze whether an interest in the paranormal may influence the behavioural intention of participating in ghost tourism. This interest or involvement can be assessed in different manners. Following Zaichkowsky (1985), involvement can be defined as the measurement of a person's connection with something, a product or activity. Consequently, involvement in mysterious events and paranormal phenomena shows the personal relevance that individuals have towards this topic.

But when selecting a destination, not only does the individual's interest have an impact, but the interests and preferences of family and/or friends with whom an individual could participate in ghost tourism. Thus, this interpersonal constraint could also influence the intention to participate in a ghost tour. Once these personal constraints are overcome, then structural constraints (cost, time, distance and appropriate package tours) come into play and potentially inhibit participation in ghost tours.

3. Research model

A research model is developed in this study. The model establishes relationships among push and pull motivations, constraints, and intentions to participate in ghost tourism. On

the one hand, push factors precede pull factors (Dann, 1981; Kim et al., 2003). Push motivations are associated to the decision to travel or not (Klenosky, 2002). Once the decision of traveling is taken, pull motivations are taken into account (Kim et al., 2003). Pull motivators are generally the attributes of the destination or tourism product which correspond adequately to the motivational push (Dann, 1981).

On the other hand, several studies demonstrate that both push and pull motivations have direct influence on behavioural intentions (Funk et al., 2009; Sato et al., 2018; Tangeland et al., 2013; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). This is why it is reasonable to suppose that both types of motivations (push and pull) may have an influence on the intention of participating in ghost tourism. In this light, the following hypotheses (H) have been postulated:

- H1: Push motivations have a positive influence on pull motivations.
- H2: Push motivations have a positive influence on the intentions of participating in ghost tourism.
- H3: Pull motivations have a positive influence on the intentions of participating in ghost tourism.

Moreover, according to the hierarchical model of leisure constraints, there is a series of factors that may act as constraints to participate in ghost tourism: intrapersonal, interpersonal and structural barriers. Several studies demonstrate that barriers are negatively related to behavioural intentions (Funk et al., 2009; Hung & Petrick, 2012a; 2012b). Consequently, based on the prior theoretical and empirical discussion, the following hypothesis is also postulated:

- H4: Intrapersonal, interpersonal and structural constraints have a negative influence on the intentions of participating in ghost tourism.

Figure 2 shows the research model. Recent studies highlight the necessity of exploring intention, since it is an important influence on actual behaviour (Line et al., 2010). Studies on tourist behaviour, which are mainly focused on theory of planned behaviour (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) to predict behavioural intentions, emphasize that intention is a key mediator by which motivation is transformed into future behaviour (Huang & Hsu, 2009). It is unlikely that individuals behave in a given way if they do not intend to behave in that way (Line et al., 2010).

[Figure 2 near here]

Rodríguez (2012) states that most tourists take ghost tours when they have previously visited other significant landmarks in the destination and they have extra time. This way, many tourists decide to take ghost tours during their tourism experience, instead of being the result of a decision made prior to the trip (Thompson, 2008). Nevertheless, a limited number of studies analyze these relationships in particular destinations or tourism products (Biran et al., 2014; Jang et al., 2009; Marzo-Navarro & Pedraja-Iglesias, 2012; Sparks, 2007).

4. Methods

4.1. Research setting

This research was conducted with residents in Córdoba (Spain) that attended a conference on the paranormal. The objective was to examine people with a certain interest in paranormal phenomena under the premise that it is more likely that they were potential tourists to participate in ghost tourism.

In Córdoba, as in other areas of Spain, there is an enormous intangible heritage that is nourished with tales of ghosts (Dancausa et al., 2019). Nevertheless, ghost tourism is still in its infancy. Córdoba offers several ghost tours around three important spots in the city, and it is also close to other areas with this type of tours. This means that the people surveyed have possibilities to participate in ghost tourism if they want to do it, and thus they can be considered as potential ghost tourists.

4.2. Survey design

The questionnaire was developed from a review of previous studies. First, a comprehensive literature review focusing on ghost tours (Heidelberg, 2015; Holloway, 2010; Ironside, 2018; Ivanova & Light, 2018; Pharino et al., 2018; Rodríguez, 2012; Seeman, 2002; Singleton, 2017; Thompson, 2008, 2010) was conducted to generate a list of measurement items. In particular, a list of 15 push factors and 14 pull factors was produced. Later, a group of experts was chosen, including 2 managers of companies devoted to ghost tours and 2 persons who had previously participated in ghost tours. Then, the list was submitted to the group of experts, who judged the applicability of the measurement items to the study and added new items. Specifically, the discussion of experts resulted in 11 push factors and 12 pull factors (see Table 1 for items). These items were assessed by a five-point Likert-type scale, ranging from “not important” (1)

to “very important” (5).

According to prior studies (Getz & Brown, 2006; Marzo-Navarro & Pedraja-Iglesias, 2012), the survey also included 6 types of constraints to participate in ghost tourism (1 intrapersonal constraint, 1 interpersonal constraint, and 4 structural constraints), all of them measured with a single item. Finally, and following Marzo-Navarro and Pedraja-Iglesias (2012), behavioural intention was measured with 3 items. For all these cases, a five-point Likert-type scale (1=“totally disagree”, 5=“totally agree”) was used.

Finally, a pre-test was carried out in order to increase the reliability of the research, including comprehension, and to check the validity and reliability of the scales (Jennings, 2001). Specifically, 30 attendees at a brief conference on the paranormal participated in the pre-test. As a result of this process, no modification was required.

4.3. Data collection

The target respondents were selected using a convenience-sampling approach. The questionnaire was conducted by fifteen well-trained students from the university, directly supervised by the authors. Specifically, the questionnaire was personally administered in October 2017, on the street, while individuals waited to enter the theatre, where the conference on the paranormal took place. Surveyors approached every fifth individual, attempting to alternate between genders and to approach only one individual per group. Moreover, the confidentiality and anonymity of the information provided by the participants was ensured. Finally, 190 surveys were issued, of which 177 were valid. The sample was balanced in terms of gender composition (50%). The age of the respondents mainly ranged from 26 to 35 years (32%) and 36 to 45 years (25.71%). Most of the respondents had taken university degrees (46.24%) or vocational training (41.04%), were married (59.30%) and their incomes were lower than 1500 euro

per month (72.42%).

It is essential to know the opinions of potential tourists. Therefore, information must be obtained from both people with a previous experience in this type of tourism and people with no previous experience (Marzo-Navarro & Pedraja-Iglesias, 2009). The sample analyzed here consists mainly (61.14%) of respondents with no previous experience in activities related to ghost tourism.

4.4. Data analysis

First, dimensions of push and pull motivations were determined using exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation and for factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0. Second, a structural model was proposed to test relationships among motivations, constraints and behavioural intentions. The structural model was evaluated by using the partial least squares (PLS) approach, instead of the approach based on covariance (CB). Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) accommodates single-item measures and does not require data normality, nor a large sample size (Hair et al., 2017). The analysis was conducted using the XLSTAT/PLSPM software.

5. Results and discussion

5.1. Dimensions of the motivations

The exploratory factor analysis was carried out for pull and push motivations.

Regarding push motivations, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was 0.863, above the recommended benchmark (0.6), and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($\chi^2=617.326, p = 0.000$) (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Furthermore, Cronbach's alpha coefficients are higher than 0.7, confirming good internal reliability. Results show two factors that explain 55.45% of the variance. The two components can

be interpreted as “search for novelty and emotional experiences” (29.88% of the variance; eigenvalue = 4.826; Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.809$), and “search for cognitive experiences” (25.57% of the variance; eigenvalue = 1.273; Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.779$). These results are in line with previous studies on dark tourism that underline that to understand this type of tourism it is more useful to focus on experiences (Johnston, 2013; Walter, 2009). The tourist’s experience includes cognitive and affective forces (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). Thompson (2008), however, categorized the motivations in “search for pleasure” (fun or enjoyment) and “search for authenticity” (this category mentioned haunting, paranormal, curiosity and the desire for a new experience), while Ivanova and Light (2017) distinguished between “general or incidental motives unrelated to horror or death”, “interest in horror and the macabre” and “interest in learning about the past”. In our study, the first factor is more similar to the “general or incidental motives” suggested by Ivanova and Light (2018), while the second factor is more similar to the two remaining categories of their study.

Regarding pull motivations, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was 0.840, which is greater than 0.6, and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($\chi^2=775.075, p = 0.000$). Moreover, Cronbach’s alpha coefficients demonstrated good internal reliability. Results found three components that explain 61.74% of the variance. The three factors can be seen as “core attraction of the ghost tour” (20.97% of the variance; eigenvalue = 5.059; Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.770$), “extra attraction of the ghost tour” (20.59% of the variance; eigenvalue = 1.334; Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.739$), and “organization of the ghost tour” (20.18% of the variance; eigenvalue = 1.016; Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.759$).

Once the dimensions corresponding to the push and pull factors were established, the PLS model was evaluated.

5.2. Model estimation

The analysis of PLS models firstly include the evaluation of measurement models.

Secondly, they include the evaluation of the structural models (Hair et al., 2011).

5.2.1. Evaluation of the measurement model

The evaluation of reflective measurement models involves different analysis: reliability of indicators, reliability of internal consistency, and convergent and discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2011). In this study, the reliability analysis of the indicators showed that all of them have loading over 0.70, indicating that the construct explains over 50% of the indicator's variance, except 8 cases that had lower levels, ranging from 0.563 and 0.692 (Table 1). Some researchers, however, think that loadings of 0.50 or 0.60 can also be acceptable (Chin, 1998). Hair et al. (2017) state that items with loadings between 0.400 and 0.707 should only be considered for elimination if removing these indicators leads to an increase in composite reliability and the average variance extracted (AVE) values above the threshold values. Following this rule, no item was eliminated.

[Table 1 near here]

The internal consistency analysis for each construct showed that all composite reliability values are over 0.7, the critical level set for this type of evaluation.

Convergent validity was tested since all the constructs obtained AVE values over 0.5, indicating that on average the construct explains over 50% of the variance of its items.

Discriminant validity was confirmed since AVE for each construct exceeded the square correlations between the construct and all other constructs (Table 2).

[Table 2 near here]

After analyzing and testing the reliability and validity of the measurement model, the structural model can be evaluated.

5.2.2. Evaluation of the structural model

The structural model was evaluated by analyzing the coefficient of determination (R^2) and the predictive relevance (Q^2) of the endogenous variables, as well as the significance of the paths (Hair et al., 2011). Figure 3 shows the results. R^2 values were above the threshold of 0.10 (Falk & Miller, 1992). In particular, the proposed model explains between the 39.6% and 44.9% of the variance of the constructs. In relation to “intention of participating in ghost tourism”, the model explains the 39.6% of its variance. In addition, the Stone-Geisser’s Q^2 values obtained by blindfolding were above zero, revealing the predictive importance of the model.

[Figure 3 near here]

The results obtained in this study show that hypothesis 1 is supported, while hypotheses 2, 3, and 4 are partially supported. The results confirm that push motivations have a positive and significant influence on pull motivations (H1 is supported), similar to previous studies’ results (Dann, 1981; Kim et al., 2003). In line with Klenosky’s research (2002), it is proved that any of the pull factors of a ghost tour can be fostered by various push factors. Nevertheless, deepening the results, it becomes clear that those who search for novelty and emotional experience are more attracted by the core attraction of the ghost tour ($\beta=0.509$), while those who search for a cognitive experience are more attracted by the extra attraction ($\beta=0.542$). According to Dann

(1981), it seems that the pull factors of ghost tours correspond properly with tourists' push factors. It seems consistent that those who are more attracted to the extra attraction of the ghost tour search for a cognitive experience, while those who are more attracted to the core attraction mainly search for a new and thrilling experience. Furthermore, these results seem to be in line with Krisjanous's (2016) and Rodríguez's (2012) finding in relation with the offer of ghost tours. These authors affirm that those tours with a more educational approach focus on extra attractions, as the expertise of the tour guide, the explanation, and the use of psychophonies.

H2 is partially supported, as the two push motivations have a positive influence on the behavioural intentions, but only the search for the novelty and emotional experiences has a significant effect. This result is consistent with previous studies (Ivanova & Light, 2018; Rodríguez, 2012; Thompson, 2010), that highlight that tourists participate in ghost tours more for entertainment and general motives such as having new experiences or visiting unusual places, than for other reasons more related to the possibility of an authentic encounter with ghosts and to learn and understand something about it. This finding is also in line with previous literature on tourism, which reveals that desires for new and thrilling activities are particular important push motivations. The interest in travelling to search for different activities is increasing (Bentley et al., 2003). As Wearing (2002) states, the 21st century tourist is looking for new and thrilling ways of traveling as an alternative to the most common varieties based on sun and sand.

H3 is partially supported, since pull motivations have a positive direct influence on behavioural intentions, but only the organization of the ghost tour has a significant effect. According to these results, the two push factors have an indirect and significant impact on the behavioural intention through the pull factor of organization of the ghost

tour. These indirect effects ($\beta=0.106$ for new and emotional experience; $\beta=0.077$ for cognitive experience) again confirm the main importance of the search for novelty and emotional experiences in behavioural intention. As other studies demonstrate, pull motivations influence behavioral intentions (Marzo-Navarro & Pedraja-Iglesias, 2009; 2012; Sato et al., 2018; Tangeland et al., 2013), but when attempting to predict the behaviour of tourists, researchers must consider both push and pull factors (Tangeland et al., 2013). However, when analyzing these results, it must be considered that most of the respondents in this study have never participated in ghost tourism. Participants and nonparticipants may differ with respect to the effect of push and pull motivations on behavioral intentions (Hung & Petrick, 2012a).

H4 is partially supported. On the one hand, personal constraints have a negative influence on the intentions of participating in ghost tourism. The influence of structural constraints, although positive, is very near to zero. On the other hand, only the intrapersonal constraint has a significant influence on behavioural intentions. It is important to identify in this case that the other two types of constraints (interpersonal and structural) do not act as such.

Like other previous studies (e.g. Zhang et al., 2012; 2016), this study then verifies that intrapersonal constraints are the ones that have the most influence in the analyzed decision-making process, specifically if we consider that most of the respondents in this study have never participated in ghost tourism (Hung & Petrick, 2012a). Hung and Petrick (2012a), in their study on constraints to cruising, found that noncruisers reported more on intrapersonal and interpersonal constraints than cruisers, while cruisers reported more on structural constraints.

6. Conclusions

Ghost tourism is emerging in numerous destinations all around world. The

understanding of both motivations and constraints for the participation of tourists in this type of tourism is critical for a successful development, however, literature on ghost tourism is scarce. This research is focused on identifying the motivations that should be considered in the offer of ghost tourism from the push and pull framework, as well as on analyzing the impact of both motivations and constraints in the intention of potential tourists to participate in ghost tourism in the context of Western countries such as Spain, where this type of tourism is in an incipient stage. In this study, the research was conducted with potential domestic tourists in Spain.

6.1. Theoretical implications

This study has several implications for theory. First, our study contributes to the understanding of ghost tourism by identifying motivations of potential tourists based on the push-pull conceptual framework. Few studies discuss the motivation of tourists to participate in ghost tourism (Ironsides, 2018; Ivanova & Light, 2018; Singleton, 2017; Thompson, 2008, 2010), and no research explores the motivation within a push and pull framework. Our results show that “search for novelty and emotional experience” and “search for cognitive experience” are the underlying push motivations of potential tourists; while “core attraction”, “extra attraction” and “organization” of the ghost tour are the underlying pull motivations.

Second, to the best of our knowledge, this study is among the first studies that provide empirical evidence of the role of motivations and constraints on the behavioral intentions of potential ghost tourists. Thus, our findings advance the understanding of potential tourist behavior in the context of ghost tourism. The findings of this research confirm that push motivations have a positive effect on pull motivations (Dann, 1981; Kim et al., 2003) and that any of the pull factors can be fostered by various push factors (Klenosky, 2002). Furthermore, the findings reveal that when attempting to predict the

behaviour of tourists, researchers must consider both push and pull factors (Tangeland et al., 2013) and restrictions (Funk et al., 2009; Hung & Petrick, 2012a). In terms of motivations, the findings indicate that push factors related to the search for novelty and emotional experiences are the main determinants of behavioral intention. These findings are consistent with previous researches (Ivanova & Light, 2018; Rodríguez, 2012; Thompson, 2010). Our findings also show that the organization of the ghost tour is the only pull factor that influences behavioral intentions. In terms of restrictions, only the intrapersonal constraint has a significant impact on behavioural intention. Thus, this restriction is the most important, in line with other studies (Hung & Petrick, 2012a; Zhang et al., 2012; 2016).

In general, the results of this study provide empirical support to improve the understanding of ghost tourism consumption. Moreover, the analysis of potential tourists as opposed to actual tourists allows more nuanced understanding of tourist behaviour.

6.2. Managerial implications

Regarding practical implications, the agents interested in promoting ghost tourism must face the challenge of developing specific strategies designed to increase the interest in mysterious and paranormal events. For this end, they should consider that popular media and entertainment influences (television, series, films, books, and the Internet) play an important role in reviving popular interest in the paranormal (Haynes, 2016), and ghostly episodes have a high propensity to go viral across media platforms, primarily social media platforms (Hill et al., 2018). At the same time, all the agents involved in developing an appropriate tourism offer must bear in mind the elements of motivation that have proven to be critical in this study. When people have overcome their intrapersonal constraints, and have shown their interest in mysterious and

paranormal events, have to find an offer that suits their desires. Recognizing the role of “search for novelty and emotional experiences” in influencing intention to participate in ghost tourism, we recommend that marketers should prioritize emotional content in advertising. But potential visitors must process this emotional content unconsciously. When emotional elements are consciously processed, their effectiveness is weakened (Bornstein, 1989). According to Houran et al. (2020), paranormal media such as photographs and audio or video clips depicting scenes or instances of unusual phenomena function as powerful covert emotional content for paranormal tourism. Moreover, testimonials and electronic word of mouth (reviews or accounts of experiences from past visitors) give potential visitors some approximation of the customer value of products or services. Consequently, paranormal media and testimonials can work in tandem to foster ghost tourism.

There is no doubt that in this incipient state the ability of the agents involved to offer new and thrilling experiences is key. In this sense, it is important to keep in mind that those visitors who search for novelty and emotional experience are more attracted by the core attraction of a ghost tour versus its extra attraction. But also, another key factor is the provision of an organized trip with a well-defined route on ghostly events and a proper time planning. Once this incipient phase has passed, however, it would be necessary to make an attempt to offer elements of higher added value, so that in the future may become competitive advantages.

6.3. Limitations and future research

This research has some limitations. First, this study was conducted in Córdoba only. The survey participants lived near other areas with ghost tours. This may give a possible explanation why structural constraints have not shown a substantial impact on behavioural intentions. In other places, where the distances between ghost tourism

destinations are much longer, elements like cost, distance and time may act as real constraints. Moreover, and due to the fact that the respondents were attending a conference on paranormal phenomena, it could also be argued that interpersonal and structural restrictions could have been negotiated during the decision-making process of visiting that conference. In this light, and although the limitations may be perceived when considering future visits to ghost tours, their impacts on the behavioural intention become insignificant. Future research should replicate this study in other regions to validate our findings. A second limitation relates to the measurement of the constructs. Regarding restrictions, a single item was used for each barrier. Thus, future research should use multi-item measurements for each constraint. Furthermore, although this research explores the most important intrapersonal constraint (lack of interest), the item used to measure this construct is not the most appropriate. Future research should measure this construct through other items (e.g., Hung & Petrick, 2010; Zheng et al., 2018). Regarding motivations, the scale used to push and pull motivations is appropriate, however, future research could develop better measures following all procedures and techniques recommended by Churchill (1979). Finally, as future research lines, we suggest further exploration of intrapersonal restrictions in order to identify underlying dimensions, the analysis of the relationship between motivations and constraints (Zheng et al., 2018) or the verification of the structural model of two subsamples: people who have participated vs people who have not participated in ghost tourism.

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Table 1. Evaluation of the measurement model.

| | | Mean | Standard Deviation | Loading* | Cronbach's α | Composite reliability |
|---|---|-------|-----------------------|--------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Push motivations | EE:Search for novelty and emotional experience | | | | 0.809 | 0.867 |
| | Just out of curiosity | 3.949 | 0.979 | 0.750 | | |
| | Desire to do something different | 3.747 | 1.192 | 0.691 | | |
| | Just for fun | 3.713 | 1.100 | 0.743 | | |
| | Seek for a thrilling experience | 3.830 | 1.021 | 0.766 | | |
| | Desire to visit unusual places | 3.608 | 1.090 | 0.717 | | |
| | Desire to be scared | 3.177 | 1.502 | 0.653 | | |
| | CE:Search for cognitive experience | | | | 0.779 | 0.845 |
| | Desire to know more about what we will find after death | 3.383 | 1.301 | 0.692 | | |
| | Desire to meet people interested in mysterious or paranormal events | 3.321 | 1.207 | 0.708 | | |
| Need to see the place to feel empathy with the witnesses | 3.510 | 1.152 | 0.801 | | | |
| Better understanding of the testimonies | 3.675 | 1.002 | 0.825 | | | |
| Desire to discover the history of the building | 3.724 | 1.237 | 0.563 | | | |
| Pull motivations | CA:Core attraction of the ghost tours | | | | 0.770 | 0.846 |
| | Fun and mystery are enjoyed together | 4.026 | 0.883 | 0.707 | | |
| | To be able to enter into places where the strange phenomena have occurred | 4.177 | 0.863 | 0.752 | | |
| | The place is famous due to past events | 3.790 | 1.114 | 0.747 | | |
| | History and mystery are enjoyed together | 4.151 | 0.862 | 0.831 | | |
| | EA:Extra attraction of the ghost tour | | | | 0.739 | 0.831 |
| | The guide is a well-known and prestigious expert in the world of mystery | 4.035 | 0.956 | 0.655 | | |
| | The events occurred there have appeared in the media | 3.621 | 0.951 | 0.737 | | |
| | Use of radio-guides during the visit | 3.529 | 1.125 | 0.723 | | |
| | Psychophonies are played during the activity | 3.980 | 1.142 | 0.825 | | |
| OR: Organization of the ghost tour | | | | 0.759 | 0.849 | |
| The visit lasts at least 2 hours | 3.574 | 1.408 | 0.798 | | | |
| The visit takes place in the evening | 3.788 | 1.174 | 0.768 | | | |
| The ghost route is well-defined | 3.961 | 0.863 | 0.800 | | | |
| There is an organized trip of ghost tourism | 3.737 | 1.067 | 0.690 | | | |
| Constraints | IC:Intrapersonal constraint | | | | | |
| Interest in mysterious events | 1.977 | 1.079 | | | | |

| | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|-------|-------|-------------------------|
| | and paranormal phenomena (R)** | | | |
| | PC:Interpersonal constraint | | | |
| | My family/friends are more attracted to other destinations rather than those related to ghost tourism | 3.168 | 1.175 | |
| | SC: Structural constraints | | | 0.708 0.815 |
| | The cost of trips related to ghost tourism is high | 3.506 | 0.987 | 0.678 |
| | I would need more free time to participate in trips of ghost tourism | 4.000 | 0.997 | 0.766 |
| | To participate in ghost tourism, it is important that the place to visit is nearby | 3.660 | 0.985 | 0.749 |
| | There are no appropriate ghost package tours | 3.567 | 0.994 | 0.761 |
| Behavioural intention | IP: Intention to participate in ghost tourism | | | 0.723 0.845 |
| | I would like to visit the areas of ghost tourism that I know (places that I have read about or watch on TV...) | 3.509 | 1.189 | 0.649 |
| | I would like to visit the most famous places related to ghost tourism | 3.905 | 1.015 | 0.889 |
| | I would like to participate in ghost tourism in the future | 4.112 | 1.028 | 0.833 |

Notes: * Significant at $p < 0.01$; ** (R) denotes item requiring reverse scoring.

Table 2. Discriminant validity analysis: square correlations between constructs and AVE.

| | EE | CE | CA | EA | OR | IC | PC | SC | IP | AVE |
|----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|----|-------|
| EE | | | | | | | | | | 0.520 |
| CE | 0.346 | | | | | | | | | 0.524 |
| CA | 0.404 | 0.264 | | | | | | | | 0.578 |
| EA | 0.257 | 0.426 | 0.371 | | | | | | | 0.544 |
| OR | 0.348 | 0.295 | 0.338 | 0.282 | | | | | | 0.586 |
| IC | 0.159 | 0.176 | 0.193 | 0.216 | 0.173 | | | | | - |
| PC | 0.000 | 0.001 | 0.009 | 0.019 | 0.007 | 0.066 | | | | - |
| SC | 0.106 | 0.117 | 0.076 | 0.122 | 0.112 | 0.103 | 0.053 | | | 0.517 |
| IP | 0.271 | 0.197 | 0.222 | 0.215 | 0.295 | 0.186 | 0.002 | 0.085 | | 0.635 |

Figure 1. Ghost tourism in the context of different related tourism niches (Pharino et al., 2018).

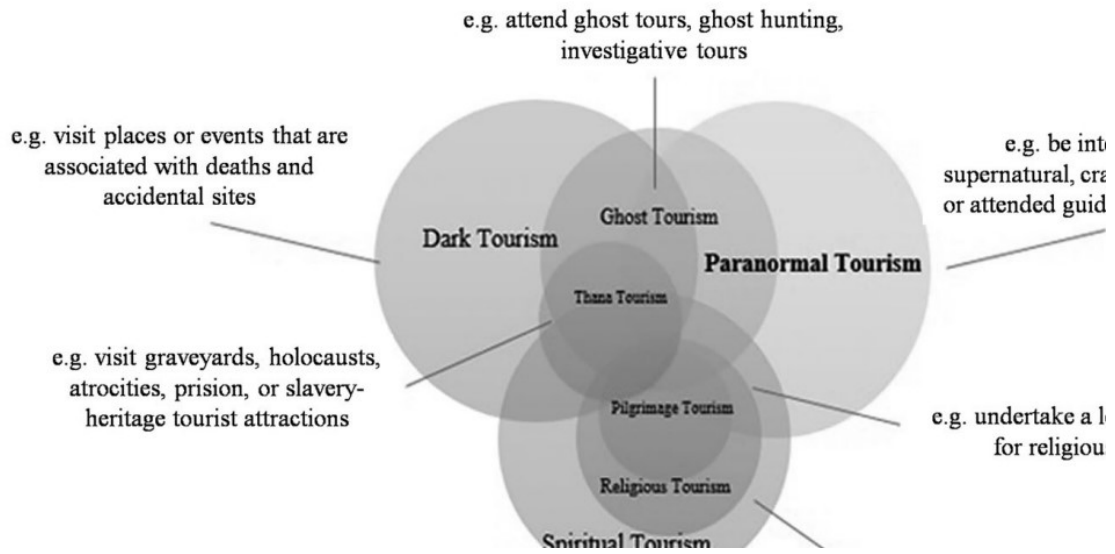


Figure 2. Proposed Model.

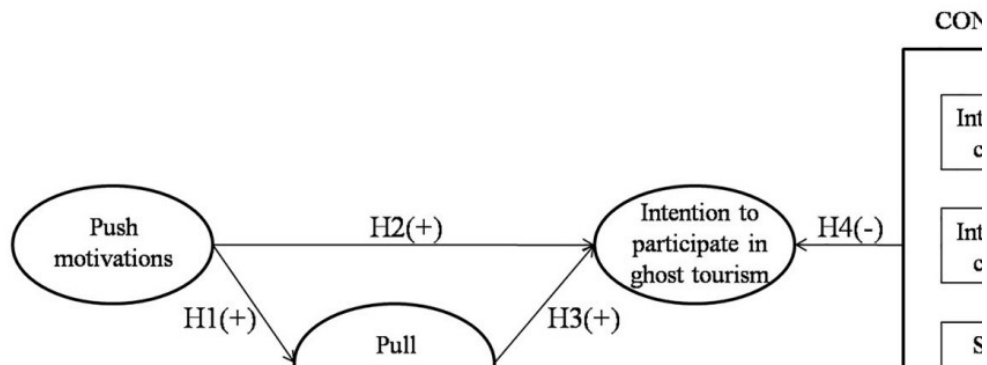


Figure 3. Results of the PLS analysis.

