Connectivity and the Consequences of Being (Dis)connected

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Abstract Technology and tourism have worked in tandem for many years. Connectivity is the vehicle that drove the goal of technologically enhanced tourism experiences forward. This study, through an exploratory qualitative research identifies the factors that boost and/or distract travellers from obtaining a connectivity enhanced tourism experience. Four factors can boost and/or distract travellers from being connected: (1) hardware and software, (2) needs and contexts, (3) openness to usage, and (4) supply and provision of connectivity. The research also analyses the positives and/or negative consequences that arise from being connected or disconnected. A Connected/Disconnected Consequences Model illustrates five forms of positive and/or negative consequences: (1) availability, (2) communication, (3) information obtainability, (4) time consumption, and (5) supporting experiences. A better understanding of the role and consequence of connectivity during the trip can enhance traveller experience.

Keywords Connectivity • During-trip stage • Disconnection • Selective unplugging • Social Wi-Fi

1 Introduction

Visualise a traveller who is embarking on a week holiday. As he makes his way to the airport, he listens to music on *Spotify*, keeps socially updated on *Facebook*, and completes the online check-in for the flight. He boards the flight with a boarding pass that was retrieved on a smartwatch, arrives at the destination, and books a ride with *Uber* to the city centre. After checking-in at the hotel, the visitor chooses and books a restaurant through *TripAdvisor*, and navigates to it using *Google Maps*. Once the food arrives, he captures a photo and uploads it on *Instagram and Facebook*, shares his/her location and writes a short insight on *Twitter*, chats on *WhatsApp* and reviews the restaurant on *TripAdvisor*. *Google Now*, suggests a list of attractions in the vicinity that he might want to visit. Once in the recommended attraction, he opens *Periscope* and shares a live stream of the view with people from

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all around the world. All of these activities are possible with current technology and require internet connectivity. Although this, by no means, represents how all travellers use technology, it illustrates functional possibilities that many individuals currently operate. For software and devices that make this picture possible, they all require internet connectivity. The ever-increasing body of work on how information and communication technologies (ICTs) influence travellers during their trip has often focused on how digital media, software, and devices can increase communication, gather information, co-create, and improve experiences (e.g. Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2013; Buhalis & Foerste, 2013, 2015; Lamsfus, Martín, Alzua-Sorzabal, & Torres-Manzanera, 2015; Neuhofer, Buhalis, & Ladkin, 2014, 2015; Wang & Fesenmaier, 2013). On the opposite end of the spectrum, there is also emerging research on the induced experiences and tensions resulting from disconnection or unplugging from technology (e.g. Paris, Berger, Rubin, & Casson, 2015; Pearce & Gretzel, 2012). Connection and disconnection have been studied exclusively in their own respective worlds. Researchers often ignore the fact that travellers have to adjust between the two states of connectivity during their travels rather than be completely connected or disconnected. The influence of technology has primarily been observed solely from a software and/or device point of view (e.g. smartphones and wearable technologies) (e.g. Tussyadiah, 2014; Wang & Fesenmaier, 2013; Wang, Xiang, & Fesenmaier, 2014) but rarely have they specifically concentrated on the main factor that maximises their functionalities: connectivity. This study aims to fill this literature gap by exploring the factors that boost or distract the use of connectivity during a trip and the subsequent consequences of being connected and/or disconnected.

2 Theoretical Background

2.1 Connectivity and Technology Enhanced Experiences

Online communication is increasingly challenging the traditional view where tourists manage to disconnect themselves from their home and move into a potentially rewarding, life-changing or challenging space (Pearce, 2011). This notion of movement between two distant worlds has been substituted with the idea of 'digital elasticity' (Pearce, 2011; Pearce & Gretzel, 2012). Contemporary travellers explore the identity and the world of others while remaining electronically connected with their home world (Pearce, 2011; Pearce & Gretzel, 2012). The idea of disconnection whilst travelling has given way to the contemporary travellers' world where they paradoxically make systematic efforts to keep in touch with friends and family through connectivity (White & White, 2007). Constant connectivity enhance the sense of obligation for travellers to retain the same level of presence, attention, and intimacy with their friends and relatives (Larsen et al. 2007 cited by Hannam, Butler, & Paris, 2014; Pearce & Gretzel, 2012). As a result of increased use of

technology, tasks which were previously fulfilled in the pre-trip and post-trip stages are now being fulfilled during the consumption stage (Wang & Fesenmaier, 2013; Wang et al., 2014). The pre-consumption stage has been shortened as travellers tend to plan less and thus become less rigid and more spontaneous. Travellers are more open to change when an activity becomes unsatisfactory and plan alternatives on the spot. The post-trip consumption has become less necessary since experiences are already being shared live on social networks during the consumption stage (Wang et al., 2014).

Memorable travel experiences increase the likelihood and the variety of content that travellers are willing to publish on social media (Minazzi & Mauri, 2015). As social posts start to become a new form of postcards (Minazzi & Mauri, 2015), the level of friends' engagement with the content uploader can also shape the tourism experience. Kim, Fesenmaier, and Johnson's (2013) research shows a significant relationship between social-media enabled communication and emotion. Tourists can arguably have a more enjoyable and memorable experience if they acquire positive emotional support on social media during their trip. While there are increasingly exciting technological systems to enhance the experience of travellers through technology, one fundamental issue still remains: the ability to connect on the internet efficiently and cost effectively while abroad. Telecommunications and infrastructures are crucial in enabling users to connect online. The cost of connectivity through roaming often dictates users' preference for free Wi-Fi as it offers intermittent high bursts of data retrieval at a low or free cost (Gass & Diot, 2010). Increasingly, the provision of free Wi-Fi is being integrated with social logins (see www.fusionwifi.com; www.purplewifi.net). This service, termed as Social Wi-Fi, provides users with the ability to seamlessly gain access to connectivity, and also provides valuable social data for organisations. While there is increasing literature on social logins (e.g. Sun et al., 2013; Vapen, Carlsson, Mahanti, & Shahmehri, 2015), there is a significant lack of research on Social Wi-Fi, and especially travellers' perception of this connectivity enabler. The demolition of roaming charges in Europe in June 2017 also will enable travellers to use their data allowance throughout Europe facilitating constant connectivity.

2.2 Disconnection and Unplugging

The inability to connect online can be either forced on the traveller or it could even be the traveller's own personal decision (Paris et al., 2015). The absence of highly familiar sensory inputs and disconnection creates technology-induced tensions that can potentially evoke both positive and negative feelings (Pearce & Gretzel, 2012). The level of reaction towards being unplugged depends on the original intent of the trip, the perceived need of staying connected and the level of control and choice over the disconnection and there might be marketing potential for disconnection as long as it is the travellers' choice to be unplugged (Paris et al., 2015). If the traveller is originally aware that he/she will be in a dead zone area, or desire to be in a dead

zone area, then the level of anxiety will drop because of the awareness and the preparation which is done beforehand to deal with the eventual disconnection. Induced anxiety from disconnection might be related to the perceived need of staying online, as well as the level of addiction to the internet (Paris et al., 2015). The constant need to check and think about new notifications is often a consequence of smart devices (Harwood, 2014). While it is hard to argue against the convenience that internet brings to modern life, a high proportion of the population have developed an addiction to it (Ko, Yen, Chen, Chen, & Yen, 2005). Addicted users might not only feel higher anxiety or distress than typical travellers because of disconnection, but they might also find their denied mobility as unacceptable (Hannam et al., 2014).

3 Methodology

This study employed an exploratory qualitative research by conducting face-to-face semi-structured interviews. The primary research utilised a purposive sample since it represents an effective method for a pre-determined criteria for the selection of participants (Bryman 2008 cited by Neuhofer et al., 2015). The pre-defined criteria required participants to be proficient in technology and have travelled within the last 12 months to recall travel experiences. Sixteen participants were interviewed between 26th of May and 8th of June 2015. Three pilot studies were conducted in the UK prior to executing the final interviews in Malta to minimise ambiguities and confusions in the research. The island of Malta was selected as an ideal location to obtain experiences of international travellers as both locals and tourists have to travel beyond their immediate boundaries to access or leave it, and thus face international enablers and barriers of connectivity. Respondents were recruited through social networks, verbal advertising, and an advert at a local university. The duration of the interviews ranged between 15 and 52 min. Table 1 shows the sample profile of the respondents. Although the participants may seem socio-demographically diverse, the study was not attempting to recruit a representative sample or claiming for generalisability, but to explore the issue of connectivity in a way which is transferable to related contexts (Line, Jain, & Lyons, 2011).

To safeguard the credibility of the findings and interpretation, rigorous and prolonged engagement with the data was conducted through a qualitative thematic approach. The researcher utilised Braun and Clarke's (2006) six phases guide for thematic analysis: (1) Familiarisation with the data, (2) generating initial codes, (3) searching for themes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining and naming themes, and (6) producing the report.

Table 1 Sample profile

Number	Pseudonym	Gender	Nationality	Age
1	Tom	Male	Greek	20–29
2	Mary	Female	Maltese	20–29
3	George	Male	Australian	40+
4	Kate	Female	Italian	20–29
5	Jack	Male	Thailand	30–39
6	Sarah	Female	Italian	20–29
7	John	Male	Maltese	30–39
8	Jessica	Female	Chinese	30–39
9	Michael	Male	Taiwanese	20–29
10	Emily	Female	Italian	20–29
11	James	Male	Maltese	20–29
12	Joanne	Female	German	30–39
13	Ryan	Male	Maltese	20–29
14	Victoria	Female	French	20–29
15	Owen	Male	Maltese	20–29
16	Samantha	Female	Austrian	20–29

4 Findings

4.1 Factors Influencing an Internet Enhanced Experience

This study has identified both technological and non-technological reasons that influenced the participants' need for connectivity while travelling. The accumulation of these reasons has been classified in four main factors: (1) Hardware and software, (2) Needs and contexts, (3) Openness to usage and (4) Supply and provision of connectivity. Each of these four main factors has underlying features that can boost or discourage internet enhanced experiences.

Hardware and Software The combination of hardware and software enables connectivity to become, to a certain extent, tangible for users. The use of devices and their complimentary software allow users to connect to the internet and make use of resources. The respondents used mobility devices to gain connectivity, and operated a plethora of different software to increase the functionalities of their devices. The speed at which information can be retrieved heavily influences the level of interest in using connectivity to enhance an experience. Users instantly connect online to find information, co-create experiences with friends, relatives and/or suppliers, and consequently become an accompaniment to their trip. While hardware and software enable users to connect, some of their technological deficiencies can at the same time prove to be a barrier for connectivity. Deficiencies included: short battery life, slow and non-intuitive applications or devices. Offline applications were perceived more available, and thus reduced the need for the travellers to find connection. Nonetheless, few applications are able to perform

all of their functionalities while offline and they typically require users to download content prior to utilising them in a destination.

> If you have Wi-Fi you can always do something, unless your mobile dies without battery. (James)

Needs and Contexts Different desires and contexts produce different non-technological factors that can either increase or distract the need to have a connectivity enhanced experience. Effectively the impact of these influences will depend on the traveller's personal characteristics, interests, culture and previous experiences. The respondents highlighted three factors that influence the use of connectivity: travelling party, familiarity of the destination, and purpose of travel. The use of connectivity amplified when respondents were unfamiliar with the destination, travelling alone and/or accommodated the purpose trip (and vice-versa). Familiarity includes factors such as: knowledge of spoken language, previous experiences in the destination, and prior preparation. In case of unfamiliarity, connectivity was a mediator and a tool to become rapidly more familiar with the destination.

> Without Wi-Fi you speak with people, you ask people in the street because they can help you, they're like your offline internet, but when you don't speak the language, you don't know the city, so you are just pretty lost. (Emily)

Openness to Usage The study has observed three particular voluntary approaches to connectivity: (1) Actively connected, (2) Selective unplugging, and (3) Self-Imposed total disconnection. The first approach, *actively connected*, refers to users who desired to be connected throughout their trip: they desire to keep socially updated, keep up with work developments, co-create their experiences, find tourist details and reviews about particular places. Some respondents even admitted that, during their travels, they often become even more active than usual on social media. This also supports Minazzi and Mauri's (2015) claim that memorable travel experiences can increase the amount and variety of content that travellers' publish on social media.

> I don't post photos or status normally, but, when I travel well it's the time to brag you know *[laughs]* so I quite often upload photo, but that's also for my family, I want to share my experience – like real time experience with my family and friends as well. (Jessica)

The second approach to connectivity, *selective unplugging*, refers to being partially active or inactive. Users, rather than being completely disconnected from the internet, are selective in what and/or when they want to disconnect from. Selective unplugging may be blocking work e-mails from the typical use of connectivity. Moreover, selective unplugging can also refer to restrict online usage to specific time of the day. Selective unplugging becomes an increasingly important approach as travellers start to recognise the side effects of being completely connected online. This stems from a conscious effort to reduce overdependence on technology and to enrich the physical and emotional experience in a destination. As certain functionalities and abilities of connectivity are able to complement the travel experience, travellers still connect at certain moments or for specific features.

Hence, travellers strive to find a balance between connection and disconnection in the type of usage and level of consumption.

> When I am on vacation I normally decide not to see any emails, still I search the internet, check the news, log on my Facebook, Twitter, but not emails so that at least I don't see what work is coming for me when I return home" (George); "When I was in a bar, I was looking at places where we could go, and then I just realised, why not just enjoy the moment and I will look up places before sleeping. (James)

The third approach, *self-imposed total disconnection*, refers to users that decide to completely block internet connectivity. This is not referring to dead zone areas where users are unable to connect online because of insufficient infrastructure (Pearce & Gretzel, 2012). On the contrary, it is the travellers' personal choice to avoid internet connection with the aim to fully escape from technology and every day realities.

> If I'm travelling, with my backpack then I don't use internet – I don't like using it. There is some point where I really need to be disconnected. (Sarah)

Provision and Supply of Connectivity While participants have different options to connectivity during their trip, the ability to connect online remains under the prerogative of the suppliers of connectivity. Provision and supply of connectivity through suitable telecommunications infrastructure (data networks, Wi-Fi) enables users to connect (Neuhofer et al., 2015). The availability and cost of connectivity often discourages travellers from obtaining a connectivity-enhanced experience. Preference is often given to free Wi-Fi hotspots even with their limited coverage. Wi-Fi is typically free-to-access and tends to provide faster and more reliable connection than data networks (Gass & Diot, 2010). Participants who used 3G/4G networks during their trips often restricted their usage to essential activities and avoided certain functionalities (e.g. social networking, viewing multimedia) to limit the amount of data downloaded and costs. International mobile information search behaviour is constrained by not only the availability of networks but also the cost of network access (Dewan & Benckendorff, 2013).

> Yeah I use Wi-Fi wherever it is: the hotel, hostel or restaurant or coffee shop. I am not trying to use the 3G that I have because it costs money and I don't want to spend money when there is Wi-Fi. (Sarah)

With the proliferation of social network users and the consumers' increasing value for provision of connectivity, it is not surprising that organisations are starting to fuse the two together and offer 'Social Wi-Fi' (see: www.fusionwifi.com; www.purplewifi). The term *Social Wi-Fi* integrate social logins with the accessibility and provision of Wi-Fi. Social Wi-Fi provides a convenient way to access connectivity and, provision of connectivity no longer remains a service which is valuable solely for consumers, but it also becomes a product which is equally valuable for suppliers. Permitting users to utilise Wi-Fi through logging in their respective social networks allows organisations to increase engagement with customers and retrieve valuable data. Social Wi-Fi received mixed feedback by the respondents. Social

Wi-Fi was praised for being more convenient as it is faster to connect to and also avoids password fatigue—benefits which are similar to the perceived benefits of social logins on websites (Gafni & Nissim, 2014; Sun et al., 2013). However, users were also concerned about the intrusiveness of these services, as these services retrieve data from their social network accounts and felt privacy invasiveness (Vapen et al., 2015). Privacy concerns on Social Wi-Fi perpetuate over and above the typical social logins concerns because travellers lack knowledge on the operators that provide the Social Wi-Fi service, whilst locals may trust an established brand in the marketplace.

This study identifies four factors that influenced the willingness of the participants to connect to Social Wi-Fi: (1) users' attitude towards privacy, (2) availability of substitutes, (3) perceived value of connectivity, and (4) perceived reputation of supplier. The stronger perceived value of connectivity and reputation of supplier, the more likely participants were willing to connect to Social Wi-Fi. The stronger the care for privacy and the availability of substitutes, the less likely were respondents to use Social Wi-Fi. Figure 1 presents four main influences that can boost or discourage the need and use of connectivity.
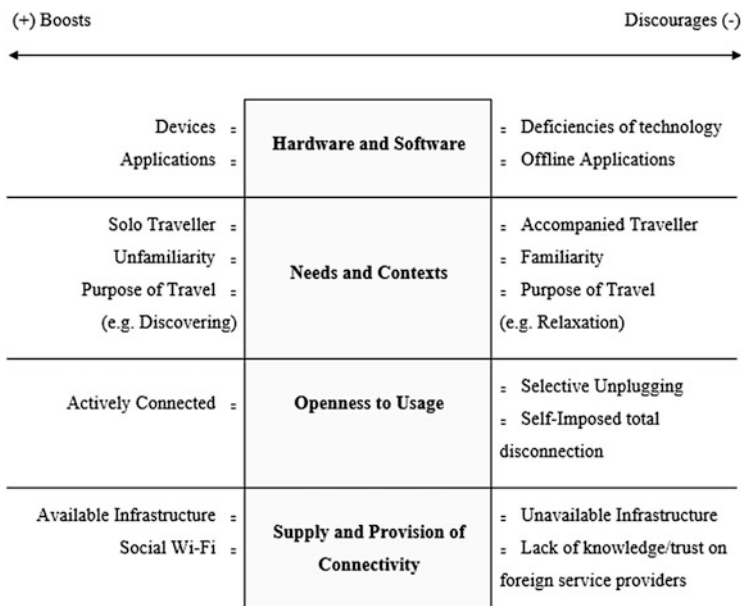

Fig. 1 Factors that boost or discourage use of connectivity

4.2 Consequences of Connection and Disconnection

The state of being connected or disconnected imposed a number of positive and negative consequences on the respondents. The research classifies five forms of consequences: (1) availability, (2) communication, (3) information obtainability, (4) time consumption, and (5) supporting experiences. In each of these consequences, the research highlights both positive and negative attributes that arise from connection or disconnection.

Availability refers to the presence of the traveller in the online and physical world. The ability to connect online provides tourists an opportunity to maintain a link with normal life. This allows them to maintain contact with friends and relatives and work. Being available is important and a relief to some but a hindrance to others: once connected there is an ever-present expectation to maintain regular contact as if the traveller were still at home. This expectation has also manifested itself in a form of addiction where users constantly keep checking for new notifications. The cognitive and behavioural need to constantly check for notification updates is often linked to smart devices (Harwood, 2014). The advantage of being disconnected is that it provided the respondents the chance to truly escape and immerse in a destination. Whether this escape from connectivity was temporal or throughout the whole course of the trip, it gave the travellers unique moments to leave behind the typical thoughts and challenges of their everyday life and immerse themselves in the travel activity or place. Nonetheless, a degree of contact with "home" was still perceived as important.

> Ten years ago no one expected you to be available. And now when you don't answer a WhatsApp message within some hours, it's like are you alive? So not sure if this is good or bad. (Samantha)

Communication While '*availability*' focuses on the presence and accessibility to converse, '*communication*' refers to face-to-face or text-based conversations. Online connection provides the ability for travellers to communicate on a number of different platforms. Respondents made use of these to share texts, images, videos, experiences—either publicly or with friends and relatives. Connectivity allows relationships and networking to grow and flourish rather than stagnate because of temporal distance. The practice of 'digital elasticity' (Pearce, 2011; Pearce & Gretzel, 2012) was a common feature, as respondents remained electronically connected with their home. One potential disadvantage of connectivity is the risk of neglecting people who are surrounding the traveller during his/her trip. This can refer to either the people who are accompanying the traveller, or tour leaders, guides, residents and other travellers. Respondents often admitted that it was far less challenging to get lost on social media than trying to converse with other immediate personnel during the trip. This potential disadvantage of connectivity becomes the positive consequence of disconnection. Without access to online communications tools, travellers needed to become more sociable and thus interacted through face-to-face conversations. The integration with accompanied

travellers, natives or other travellers can provide the tourist a more immersed experience. Respondents have often shown disappointment in facing situations where connectivity managed to replace face-to-face conversations.

> We are always with our mobile phones in our hands, it's annoying, because, people are speaking with people that they are not there, and then when they are with those people, they are speaking to us. (Kate)

Information Obtainability As tourists continue to plan less before travelling to a destination (Wang et al., 2014) and rely on connectivity to find information at the right time and at the right moment, information obtainability becomes increasingly important. One major positive consequence of an internet enhanced experience is the incredible amount of information. Respondents recalled how during their travels they used their devices to obtain assistance with tourist details, navigation, reviews and instant information. However, one negative consequence is that information can be so vast and detailed that at times it can become overwhelming or has the ability to take away experiences that are otherwise typically enjoyed differently. Disconnection provides a compelling reason to wander around a destination and enjoy experiences that are sometimes made redundant by connectivity. Some respondents argued that unplanned discoveries are perhaps even more rewarding than pre-planned activities. Nonetheless, there are occasions where retrieval of information remains essential. The inability to find swift information is one of the main disadvantage of disconnection. Being disconnected provides limited sources and detail of information. Disconnection and unfamiliarity with a destination is a combination that can induce frustration and even cause stressful moments for travellers when information is needed.

> The amount of information that you can get at every moment, every time, in whatever situation. You make the most of the experience, you do not miss anything... While when you don't have internet, you are a bit lost, and you wander around. (Emily)

Time Consumption Travellers are often constrained with a limited time during their trips. Connection or disconnection can influence the time consumed on performing certain activities. Connectivity can provide efficiency in information search as it offers access to a large database of information and enable travellers to retrieve information swiftly. Online connectivity can also lead to inefficiency and time wastage, when users not only connect to the internet for holiday purposes but also for non-holiday activities: socialising online, keeping up with work, news and so on (Wang et al., 2014). Travellers can potentially end up spending time on the *online* world and neglect the opportunity to discover the *physical* world. The advantage of being disconnected revolves around the idea that time can be exclusively spent on the holiday experience as they are less likely to be distracted if there is no connectivity. Disconnection can also be time consuming when travellers require retrieval of information. Without the assistance of online content, users have to resort to more traditional, time consuming approaches to seek information.

> I would be walking like I'm a resident there – like I already know what's happening – so that (connectivity) saved me time. (Ryan)

Supporting Experiences The online world is able to support users on information, entertainment, and communication requirements. Connectivity provided the travellers a sense of security in knowing that any needs could be addressed instantly. Minazzi and Mauri (2015) discussed how tourists reduce the perception of risk through the availability of online information and enrich their experiences with instant decisions using mobility devices. This reduces the conventional stress that arises from temporarily living in a different and unknown environment, often with its different culture, language, norms, especially when visiting for the first time. However, this can also become detrimental when travellers over-depend on it, as connectivity can become inconvenient and stressful when it is unavailable. While connectivity has the ability to aid and increase the personal development of travellers, it can also cage the traveller in his/her own online world and miss out on potential learning experiences.

Disconnection can provide travellers with a unique opportunity to be engaged with the present company and place. Disconnection can stimulate (sometimes dormant) skills and be able to enjoy "…dead zone time, space and immediate companions" (Pearce & Gretzel, 2012, p. 12). Nevertheless, respondents felt that lack of connectivity provoked a sense of missed opportunities. Connectivity complements the travel experience as it provides a sense of immediacy and assistance. Following the analysis of the consequences of being (dis)connected, Fig. 2 presents a Connected/Disconnected Consequences Model.

Connected		Consequences	Disconnected	
Positive	**Negative**	←——→	**Positive**	**Negative**
Engaged with home	Creates expectation to keep contact	**Availability**	True escape	Disengaged from home
High online presence	Offline Unsociability	**Communication**	Offline Sociability	Low online presence
Ample Information	Overload of information	**Information Obtainability**	Unplanned discoveries	Lack of instant information
Efficiency	Time wasted on non-holiday activities	**Time Consumption**	Time exclusively spent on holiday	Inefficiency
Additional dimension	Excessive reliance on connectivity	**Supporting Experiences**	Personal skill development	Missed Opportunities

Fig. 2 Connected/Disconnected Consequences Model

> Not necessarily an advantage at time because it might distracts you, however, overall I think it's a plus because it's a service that is available there and you never know what you might need off the internet. (Mary)

The model illustrates how the five forms of consequences can potentially possess positive and/or negative attributes for both connection and disconnection. The consequences of being (dis)connected depend on the level of control over the decision to have connection or disconnection, the openness for usage and the context of the traveller. The positives from being disconnected are amplified if the disconnection is the traveller's own personal decision through blocking access to connectivity or knowingly travelling in unplugged areas. The negatives will intensify if the disconnection was not a personal decision made by the traveller but was imposed on him/her. The negative consequences of both connection and disconnection can be reduced if the traveller is able (and is allowed to) strike a balance between both approaches. Being connected did not necessarily make the participants unsociable or unable to enjoy the immediate presence or companionship. The respondents' degree of control over the use and duration of connection or disconnection played a huge role in augmenting or decreasing the negative consequences. Selective unplugging was often the respondents' preferred attitude towards connectivity in order to strike a balance between the online and offline world.

5   Conclusion

This research explores the technological and non-technological issues that influenced the adoption of connectivity during the trip. This research presented findings from a qualitative exploratory research based on a small number of travellers. The results are not generalisable, but explore the consequences of connectivity. A *Connected/Disconnected Consequences Model* identifies the different forms of positive and/or negative consequences of connectivity. The proliferation of Wi-Fi and network connectivity will allow travellers to connect when required to enhance their experience. While Social Wi-Fi can prove to be useful for both the supplier and the traveller, it still has to overcome certain challenges, including willingness to adopt such service. The research identified three different approaches to connectivity: actively connected, selective unplugging and self-imposed total disconnection. Selective unplugging enables travellers to strike a balance on the usage and dependence on the internet and its supporting tools. When it comes to the decision of providing connectivity, marketers have to consider target markets and approach to connectivity and ensure that they are equipped with the right infrastructure. There may be marketing potential for disconnection as travellers seek refuge from their everyday context (Paris et al., 2015). For disconnection to be considered as a competitive advantage, businesses with this approach need to be open about their lack of connectivity infrastructure. The success of

disconnection relies on the travellers' control over the decision to be disconnected. As technology enhanced experiences, co-creation, smart destinations continue to emerge and grow (e.g. Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2013; Buhalis & Foerste, 2015; Neuhofer et al., 2014, 2015), both academics and marketers need to ensure there is the right level of infrastructure. Effectively, destinations and organisations need to ensure their telecommunications infrastructure is capable to address the needs of the market. They also need to ensure that their (technological) goal matches the (experience) goals of their target market.

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