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English Abstract

The flyer's dilemma characterizes the mental discrepancies between the environmental impact and the internal value of flying. Advertisements have the ability to leverage such behavior, however, little understanding has been established in how individuals handle the moral evaluation involved following exposure. It is argued that different strategies of moral disengagement based on Bandura (2015) are activated upon seeing an advertisement for flying, which can be accelerated by attractive fares displayed. Furthermore, the degree of hedonic traits might have an impact on the moral evaluation of activities linked to self-indulgence. Therefore, the goal of this thesis is to establish theory that answers both the research call of Stubenvoll & Neureiter (2021) for further analysis of the impact of advertisements on moral disengagement strategies and the research gap of how hedonism alters moral disengagement in the context of flying. To address whether and to what extent the moral disengagement process of the flight dilemma following advertisement exposure is strengthened by hedonistic character traits and accelerated by attractive pricing an in-between subjects design was implemented. No statistical evidence of varying levels of pricing was found on all four of the tested moral disengagement strategies ($N = 247$). Moreover, said relationship was not increased by demonstrations of hedonic traits. The presented findings were discussed and interpreted, followed by addressing overall limitations.

German Abstract

Das „Dilemma des Fliegens“ beschreibt die Diskrepanz zwischen dem internen Stellenwert von Flugreisen und den negativen Auswirkungen auf die Umwelt. Werbung ist in der Lage den internen Stellenwert von Gütern und Service-leistungen zu verstärken, jedoch wurde die moralische, interne Bewertung folgend der Exposition von Werbung wenig erforscht. Verschiedene Strategien des moralischen Disengagements nach Bandura (2015) könnten in Folge einer Flugwerbung aktiviert werden, was durch attraktive Preisgestaltung gefördert werden kann. Darüber hinaus könnten hedonische Eigenschaften einen Einfluss auf die moralische Bewertung von Aktivitäten haben, die mit persönlichem Vergnügen verbunden sind. Ziel dieser Arbeit ist es daher, eine theoretische Grundlage zu schaffen, die sowohl der Forderung von Stubenvoll & Neureiter (2021) nach einer weiteren Analyse der Auswirkungen von Werbung auf moralische Disengagement-Strategien als auch der Forschungslücke, wie Hedonismus das moralische Disengagement des Fliegens verändert, gerecht wird. Um zu untersuchen, ob und inwiefern der moralische Disengagement-Prozess des Flugdilemmas durch Werbung und hedonistische Charaktereigenschaften verstärkt und durch attraktive Preisgestaltung beschleunigt wird, wurde ein In-Between-Subjects-Design durchgeführt. Für alle vier getesteten moralischen Disengagement-Strategien (N = 247) wurden keine statistischen Hinweise auf den Einfluss von unterschiedlichen Preisniveaus gefunden. Außerdem wurde dieser Zusammenhang nicht durch die Demonstration hedonischer Eigenschaften verstärkt. Die vorgestellten Ergebnisse wurden diskutiert und interpretiert, gefolgt von der Erörterung der allgemeinen Limitationen.

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Introduction

In the recent decade, the impact of human behavior on the acceleration of climate change has been increasingly noticeable. Global warming is a direct indicator for the health of the planet, which has been leveraged consistently by polluting conduct of individuals. This is partly due to globalization leveraging the aviation industry, which in turn affect climate structures. Therefore, the increased degree of flying has a direct negative impact on the degree of global warming. Overall, aviation amounted to 2,5% of total emissions in 2019 (Dolšak & Prakash, 2022), which in total numbers equals 920 million tons of CO². Said number is on pre-pandemic levels. Between 2013 and 2019 total flight distance has increased by 23% mainly driven by an incline in the number of passengers (Graver et al., 2020). Therefore, more and more individuals are choosing the plane as their preferred means of transport for business and holidays.

However, to meet the Paris Agreements, it is vital to cut 50% of the aviation emissions level from 2005 until the year of 2050 (Zhang et al., 2021). Due to the increased communication of public media on said problematic, the societal knowledge of flying as environmental harmful has increased (Higham et al., 2013). Humans are therefore aware of the direct impact on the health of the planet. However, as argued above, the number of flyers is still expected to rise. Said construct of being aware of the environmental impacts of aviation and the perception of air travel as desirable has been named as “flyer’s dilemma” (Young et al., 2014).

Thus, it is of interest to understand how these flyers come to an agreement with themselves to take an action that is considered harmful to the environment. Furthermore, the aim is to comprehend what kind of external and internal factors contribute to their decision-making processes. It can be argued that the high numbers of flyers are expected to accelerate additionally in the future, reflecting in flying to go on holiday as a form of trendy self-indulgence leveraged by social culture. Positioning personal self-indulgence at the highest point of relevance can be seen as hedonic. Hedonism bases value of life on the pleasure attained (Feldmann, 2004). Thus, hedonistically inclined individuals might accelerate the flyer’s dilemma further. Additionally, as economic interests, such as inexpensive purchases, have a positive effect on unethical actions (Paharia et al., 2013), the dilemma of flying might be further leveraged by the emergence of cost-efficient airlines. For example, Ryanair is commonly known for offering flights at a starting price point of 9.99€, less than a last-minute train ride of 30 minutes from Vienna to St. Pölten. Thus, being presented with an attractively priced airline ticket might advance the internal decision-making process of attaining an action that is

considered harmful to the environment. Therefore, the objective of this thesis lies in understanding how the aforementioned influences of price communication and hedonic traits affect underlying moral mechanisms and their impact on airline ticket purchases.

First, it is intended to examine how incorporated prices in commercial communication of airlines can supersede knowledge on what is environmentally good. Second, whether and to what extent self-indulgence, thus hedonism, plays an incremental role in overriding moral cognition of flying will be evaluated. Different levels of displayed prices in airline advertisements will give an indication on their impacts on moral mechanisms. Inquiries on the degree of established hedonism will determine whether internal processes are advanced by hedonic traits to justify flying and can accelerate the positive effect of attractive price communication.

To contribute to the understanding of the abovementioned topics, this thesis will commence with a literature review on the flying dilemma, moral disengagement and hedonism. Based on research, hypotheses will be derived. Subsequently, the methodological part will commence with a description of the quantitative data and the implemented in-between subjects design. Following the analysis in SPSS, a conclusion will present the established findings and the address the abovementioned research gap.

1. The dilemma of flying

The tension between observing flying as environmentally harmful and the perceived intrinsic and personal value of aviation is defined as the flyer's dilemma (Young et al., 2014). Upon experiencing the flyer's dilemma, individuals have conscious and internal knowledge on the number of emissions created by the commercial aviation industry. However, ignorance or disregard is displayed to keep on obtaining the intrinsic value of flying. Therefore, they are able to ignore internal knowledge on some sort of level in order to keep up flying. Self-expression, gratification, and utilitarian motives are the main reasons for air travel (Cocolas et al., 2020). International travel is considered essential for the professional advancement of scientists, as it enables them to attend conferences or guest teach for shorter periods of time (Kroesen, 2013). Furthermore, essential air travel by students is rooted in educational or social reasons, while almost half of the flights taken are considered to be of limited importance (Gössling et al., 2019). As air travel has become a mass-market commodity, traditional marketing and communication strategies are used to generate sales. Advertising plays a crucial role in the need creation process of air travel purchases. When exposed to flight advertisements,

individuals with low levels of environmental concern tend to neglect the impact of aviation on the environment (Stubenvoll & Neureiter, 2021). Therefore, advertisements leverage the effect of the flyer's dilemma. However, said effect differs highly in individuals with high consideration of the environment: advertisements are met with resistance. Furthermore, the importance of flying abstinence and the degree of environmental impact are proclaimed (Stubenvoll & Neureiter, 2021). Such "green" consumer behavior is based on moral values (Sharma & Lal, 2020). As a result, individuals with sustainable predispositions tend to take environmental conscious actions based on their moral and ethical beliefs. Therefore, environmental values are based on moral attitudes. However, such principles do not consistently translate into actual behavior (Sharma & Lal, 2020).

Prior research of Higham et al. (2013) has linked the suppression of the harmful impact of aviation to established convenience of flying, efficiency, and low prices. Low prices of plane tickets are a crucial driver for flying demand (Gössling et al., 2019). Such processes are defined as moral disengagement (Bandura, 1990). One of the inhabiting factors of pro-environmental behavior of tourists is rooted in moral disengagement (Wu et al., 2020). To understand the mental processes involved in the act of moral disengagement the following chapter will derive an explanation and characterization to serve as a basis for further analysis. Beforehand, the communication strategies of airlines will be briefly discussed to establish a holistic framework of aviation marketing.

1.1 Communication strategies of airlines

A traveler's consumption cycle of airplane tickets frequently starts with dream-based desire for holidays (Ambrose & Waguespack, 2021). Such dream-based desire can be created through the usage of various communication strategies, such as advertisements. Thus, communication strategies foster travel inspiration to enable subsequent stages of said consumption cycle. Therefore, following communication exposure and thus need creation, actual ticket sales are initiated. The realization of as many ticket purchases as possible following advertisement exposure is seen as one of the main objectives of airlines. However, it is further crucial for airlines to create a distinct picture of a brand in consumer's minds (Ambrose & Waguespack, 2021). Said principle creates recognition among consumers and fosters airline loyalty.

Overall, the communication mix of airlines is comprised of various elements: TV advertisements, radio placements, print advertising, out-of-home displays, digital marketing, and Social Media marketing (Ambrose & Waguespack, 2021). Such methods ensure

widespread awareness among a broad target group, leveraging exposure at multiple touchpoints. For example, TV placements are commonly positioned during prime time (Celestine et al., 2022). Said research has further determined the persuading effects of traditional advertisements on airplane ticket purchase intent, which is leveraged with simultaneous placements in TV, print and digital.

Thus, airline communication strategies have the capabilities of persuading consumers towards purchasing plane tickets. They generate dream-based desire enabling the belief of enriching one's life following flying. However, consumers are commonly aware of the environmental impact of flying as discussed in the flyer's dilemma. Thus, it is further crucial to understand whether and to what extent this process is internally influenced by certain mechanisms. It can be argued that airline communication strategies and demand creation processes enable a concept called "moral disengagement" introduced by Bandura (1990). Therefore, the next chapter will describe and analyze said concept, its' implementation process, and antecedents. This will create relevant theoretical groundwork in order to understand whether and to what extent moral disengagement plays a role in enabling airline purchase decisions following advertisement exposure.

2. Moral disengagement

Human individuals have internalized codes of moral serving as guides for behavior, ensuring socialization. They self-regulate behavior and sanction themselves if they act inhumanly (Bandura, 1990). Overall, moral standards guarantee peaceful living as a society. Furthermore, positively seen behavior is promoted intrinsically to generate positive self-awareness. Therefore, any actions that are positively attributed will be pursued to create a positive sense of self. Following this line of argumentation, immoral actions, such as for example violence, should therefore be refrained from by any individual of society. However, this does not ensure morally correct behavior overall. In certain situations, individuals act against their internal morality to achieve some sort of profit (Kish-Gephart et al., 2013). Such situations oppose opportunities for personal gain in a disproportionately manner upon comparison to internal moral standards and their self-sanctions. This would conclude that positive sense of self is decreased upon said behavior. Nonetheless, internal codes of moral impose a certain amount of flexibility in terms of their actual activation (Bandura, 1990). Despite knowledge of the sinfulness of certain actions, the internal moral process of mental digest as described above is not triggered to not develop a negative sense of self. Such missing activations could be

plausible in situations such as mortal combat or self-defense. However, individuals perform immoral actions routinely in every day live, as soon as self-sanctions override external incentives, which can further lead to disabling of self-sanctions overall (Bandura, 1990).

2.1 Moral disengagement strategies

Further research by Bandura (2015) determines nine psychosocial mechanisms operating at four stages during moral self-regulation. The following sub-chapters will go in depth to establish an understanding of the various procedures of justifying immoral actions at the different stages of implementation.

2.1.1 Behavior locus

At the first stage, the *behavior locus*, moral justification, euphemistic labeling, and advantageous comparison enable moral disengagement. To clarify, internal dismantling of immoral actions takes place to transform the moral perception of certain actions to a positive one. Such sanctifying procedures require a high degree of self-persuasion.

First, individuals justify immoral behavior via linking it to righteous ends, thus masking such actions as socially valuable, establishing moral justification (Bandura, 2015). Therefore, an internal act of self-justification takes place, which excuses immoral behavior. Without said process, the actions would not be conducted, as they pose a threat to sense of self-worth. Such justifications can be part of the religious, ideological, social, economic, and constitutional spheres. Practical examples can be seen in military, whereas agents justify behavior based on reconstructing morality. Opponent fighters are perceived as ruthless killers upon which to obligation of the individual lies to kill the latter to preserve world peace. Similar trains of thought can be observed among terrorists: killing in the name of God to preserve the Muslim culture justifies actions onto Allah. Economic justification incorporates the understanding of regulating forces of the free market. Thus, the production of harmful goods is justified due to the market-based demand itself and the belief of the market's contribution to societal welfare. Second, euphemistic labeling utilizes harmless terminology to mantle certain actions (Bandura, 2015). Euphemisms are rephrases applying milder language, thus masking or soften true meaning (Arif, 2015). In practice this can manifest as the replacement of disagreeable terms, such as kill, with semantically related, but neutral language: neutralize (Walker et al., 2021). As Bandura stated (2015), language has the ability to alter the apprehension of events and thus effect personal and social acceptance of said events. Euphemisms can be understood as a part

of the linguistic concept of Doublespeak, upon which language is strategically used to create the most desirable reality of the communicator via inflated language (Walker et al., 2021). Thus, strategic communicators make use of euphemistic labeling to mask the true meaning of their words and eliminate moral hurdles of human agents.

Third, focusing on the benevolent or even altruistic value of behavior facilitates advantageous comparison. Therefore, own behavior will be contrasted against more notorious cruelties to tweak the perception of one own's wrongdoings (Bandura, 2015). Said internal mechanism can go so far as to turn inhumanly behavior into morally correct conducts. Such strategies have often been implemented by political actors, contrasting own demeanors with past wrongdoings of historical actors in front of the public and media to achieve justification. The act of anchoring the belief of harmful actions inhibiting following hardships additionally falls into the category of advantageous comparison. Therefore, an appeal to utilitarian principles is voiced and thus violence is justified. However, such assessments rely heavily on subjectivity and uncertain information (Bandura, 2015).

Based on the abovementioned descriptions of moral disengagement strategies at the behavior locus, it becomes evident that said three strategies enable agents to turn immoral behavior into human conduct. Therefore, moral justification, euphemistic labeling, and advantageous comparison enable humans to mentally change the perception of degenerate commotions into morally correct actions. Thus, entities gain positive sense of self following the implementation of such immoral conducts masked as righteous operations.

2.1.2 Agency locus

At the *agency locus* human individuals either displace or diffuse their own level of responsibility. Henceforth, placing the responsibility of their personal actions upon other agents or spreading liability upon numerous entities. This ensures detachment of guilt based on caused harm. In contrast to the behavioral locus, agents thus recognize the immorality of their actions, but distribute or diffuse the responsibility upon other individuals.

Upon the utilization of displacement of responsibility, blame is attributed to the ordering authority (Bandura, 2015). Thus, the executing party of an immoral conduct is enabled to keep their positive sense of self and displaces the blame of their actions upon the requesting group of individuals. Such processes are especially recognizable in institutionally leveraged genocide (Bandura, 2015). An important component hereby is the felt responsibility of the individual across the ordering authority. Thus, only an individual that has pledged himself to the cause

will be able to both follow through with immoral orders and subsequently do not attribute blame to himself.

Furthermore, own responsibility can be weakened via diffusing it (Bandura, 2015). One of the main fields of application are immoral actions followed through by a group of individuals. To clarify, blame is attributed to other actors of the group and not to oneself. Therefore, based on the shared responsibility, no single individual feels fully responsible. Corporate systems and cross department responsibilities are a tangible example of diffusing accountability based on group structures. Interestingly, the overall harm created when a group acts inhumanly is greater than in comparison to immoral conducts by individuals (Bandura, 2015).

Thus, the responsibility of behavior is either displaced or diffused at the agency locus. To clarify, individuals place attributed blame on other entities or diffuse harm due to group structures. The moral recognition of inhuman conduct therefore remains static and only the attribution of blame is transformed. This enables individuals to retain their positive sense of self.

2.1.3 Outcome locus

The agency locus is followed by the *outcome locus*. Therein, consequences of actions are minimized, ignored, distorted, or misconstrued masking them as non-existent (Bandura, 2015). Said strategies achieve the avoidance of blame overall. When blame is not attributed, perpetrators do not experience direct affects on self-censure. First, negative outcome is minimized. If the aforementioned approach does not lead to self-exoneration, the evidence of unfavorable consequences of actions are discredited. Overall, this mechanism is easily activated, when direct impacts of own behavior on severe reactions are neither physically noticeable nor temporally close. Furthermore, the more distance lies between the actor and the outcome, the less incisive is the effect of retainment. Thus, the higher separation between activity and response, the higher the possible degree of moral disengagement at the outcome locus. An example for such distance can be long chains of command or physical distances in immoral conduct, such as drone attacks. Therefore, the outcome is removed from the perpetrator, leveraging the retainment of positive sense of self.

Furthermore, ignoring, or distorting consequences of actions can be leveraged via the selective activation of certain mental processes. According to Bandura (2015), said processes include selective passive neglect of effects, presentation of harmful effects as less severe or obliteration of own actions. For example, the effects of human behavior on global warming are neither

directly visible nor impacting. Thus, actors readily overconsume without any impacts on their sense of self, based on the minimizing effect of outcomes based on underestimating, ignoring, distorting, or misconstruing consequences.

2.1.4 Victim locus

The last locus, the *victim locus*, affects the perception of the victim of dehumanizing actions (Bandura, 2015).

The first strategy set at the victim locus, dehumanizes the victim of inhuman conduct. In general, the strength of these actions is dependent on the internal judgment of these victims. If human characteristics similar to these of the perpetrators are ascribed to the individual suffering from immoral conduct, it becomes more difficult to inflict distress. Thus, individuals withdraw human qualities and characteristics from their victims or ascribe animalistic features to them. The latter enables agents to attribute demonic qualities to victims. Harmful conduct is effortlessly justified upon individuals seen as lower as oneself. Therefore, the more an individual is perceived as inhuman, the easier for the perpetrator to morally disengage and retain a positive sense of self. The absence of guilt through torture is an example of dehumanization of victims, followed by the dehumanization of Jews during the Second World War. Brutal conduct is mentally justified as foe is seen as not only lower than oneself, but bestial. Therefore, agents go to great lengths to display immeasurable humiliations, as the power of the humiliation itself lowers the humanity of the degraded. Therefore, dehumanization of a victim is based on the precedent humiliation to perceive an individual as less human, followed by an immoral act. Thus, by pursuing this order of events, moral disengagement is activated.

Dehumanization is notably leveraged through utilization of in-group and out-group behavior (Bandura, 2015). The formation of the out-group is based inter-alia on social, cultural, and political differences and further ascribed stereotypical characteristics. All members of the out-group are subsequently judged and dehumanized based on the stereotypes attributed by the in-group. Overall dehumanization of the victim enables reduction of moral conscience, reduces self-inflicted guilt, and enables the upkeep of a positive sense of self.

The second set of moral disengagement strategies at the level of the victim is the attribution of blame. Here, the victim of immoral conduct is internally attributed with the accountability of actions. Perpetrators thus victimize themselves as compelled to maltreat individuals. Defensive actions by the victim can be seen as the initiation of provocation, thus justifying punishment.

Furthermore, if agents self-convince themselves that their actions are brought forward simply by circumstances, they are enabled to self-exonerate. The latter even enables the view of said actions being honorable. Fundamentally, this poses a crucial threat of the overall treatment of the victim. As accusations and blame attribution anchor themselves, the victim commences to believe in their correctness and initiates self-dislike. In contrast to the moral disengagement strategy of displacement of responsibility, the blame is attributed to the victim itself and not to the ordering authority.

In contrast to the above-described strategies, humanization of the victim holds the power to discourage immoral conduct altogether (Bandura, 2015). If victims are humanized and power holders are ascribed the responsibility of their actions, punitive actions are bypassed more readily.

Overall, moral disengagement strategies at the victim level enable self-exoneration throughout blame attribution towards the victim. Thus, agents are able to remain their positive sense of self via ascribing the responsibility of immoral conduct towards the victim of their behavior.

All the described strategies showcase different methods of the missing activation of internal self-sanctioning processes in order to ensure positive sense of self. Therefore, implemented moral disengagement strategies allow to circumvent internally provoked guilt and retain a positive self-image (Kish-Gephart et al., 2013) by selective activation of an internal moral code. However, said strategies do not impact or change individuals' actual standards of moral (Bandura, 2015). What is perceived as good or bad will retain its status, as moral disengagement is simply concerning the activation of the self-sanctioning process following immoral actions. Following the theoretical framework of moral disengagement, it is crucial to gain additional understanding of the timing of implementation by agents and the preceding antecedents.

2.2 Implementation of moral disengagement

Moral disengagement is widely implemented across various fields to retain a positive sense of self. It is commonly utilized by human agents operating in military actions to circumvent reduction of positive self-worth and to justify actions (Bandura, 1990). Additionally, harmful actions are legitimized in the name of religion, terrorism, or counterterrorism. Actions in the name of religion, such as the inquisition or military self-defense, or for example nuclear weapons, are legitimized via different moral disengagement strategies. However, moral

disengagement strategies are also implemented in situations without a direct effect towards human agents, but with a similar level of malice.

For example, additional disengagement effects have been found between fashion purchase intent and knowledge of animal cruelty during the creation of fashion items (Lim et al., 2019). Furthermore, an individual's consumption of animal meat is for instance also enabled by morally disengaging from internal guilt and environmental concern (Buttlar et al., 2020; Weber & Kollmayer, 2022). Therefore, moral disengagement can be applied to immoral actions affecting both human and non-human entities.

As discussed, moral disengagement enables meat consumption with the knowledge of it being not environmental-friendly. Overall, unsustainable behavior is considerably dependent on moral disengagement processes (Stoll-Kleemann & O'Riordan, 2020). Based on Stoll-Kleemann and O'Riordan (2020), individual, unsustainable actions are linked to a high degree of denial of responsibility, thus focusing blame on other actors. Said actors are commonly structural players coming from business or politics, with a considerable potential for change. However, their decision to act unsustainably enables individual agents to deny their own guilt. Thereby, moral disengagement is quicker enabled following the participation of other, bigger players to whom guilt can be attributed towards.

Furthermore, research has focused on the effect of misconduct based on moral disengagement in corporate structures by entrepreneurs (Baron et al., 2014; Paciello et al., 2022). It has been determined that moral disengagement of employees is regulated by self-reflective and self-regulating behavior (Paciello et al., 2022). Thus, complex structures thereby lower the barriers to morally disengage. However, the degree of implementation is negatively influenced by internal regulation processes.

Therefore, moral disengagement strategies are implemented by humans in a high number of different situations, with a varying degree of severity in terms of moral impact. Moral disengagement is widely utilized in situations affecting human individuals, non-human entities, and the environment. It is leveraged by complex structures and by the participation of other, bigger actors, towards which own actions can be compared against. Individuals facilitate moral disengagement if their own actions seem less incisive as these of others. Additionally, the absence of regulatory measures by politicians likewise eases the internal reduction of guilt and thus moral disengagement.

2.3 Antecedents of moral disengagement

The extent of moral disengagement implementation can vary from individual to individual. For instance, the magnitude of moral disengagement is affected by individual differences in empathy, cynicism, moral identity, and perception of personal outcome control (Detert et al., 2008). Additionally, moral disengagement is influenced by past misbehavior (Paciello et al., 2022). To clarify, this is based on the fact, that if self-motivated behavior has once been introduced, the barrier for future misbehaving is lowered. However, if direct impact on societal health is noticeable, moral disengagement strategies become less prominent (Kish-Gephart et al., 2013). Nonetheless, social status is no indicator of the implemented degree of moral disengagement (Bandura, 2015).

Additionally, based on social cognitive theory human behavior and thus moral disengagement is rooted in the so-called triadic codetermination (Bandura, 2015). Said principle formulates, that human functioning is influenced by personal determinants, the nature of the behavior itself and the environment of the individual. The first, personality, is based on both biology and a system of beliefs, values, emotional states, attitudes, and goals (Bandura, 2015). Secondly, the physical, emotional, and social characteristics affect the nature of the behavior itself. For example, demographic variables such as race, gender, and age influence both action of and reaction to certain behavior. Third, the impact of the environment also depicts behavior. Therefore, as human functioning is influenced by the triadic codetermination, the degree of moral disengagement implementation is also affected. Moral disengagement is thus altered by personal determinants, the nature of the behavior and the environment of the individual.

To classify the effects of personality traits into antecedents, research has concluded whether and to what extent different personality traits can act as predictors of moral disengagement inclinations (Rengifo & Laham, 2022; Egan et al., 2015). For instance, Rengifo and Laham (2022) analyzed how certain personality traits of the Big Five Model act as antecedents of moral disengagement strategies. The Big Five Model dissects personality into five basic dimensions consisting of Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Neuroticism, and Openness to Experience (McCrae & John, 1992). Negative agreeableness was found to be a strong predictor of moral disengagement, as well as negative openness to experience (Rengifo & Laham, 2022). Individuals scoring low on agreeableness have thus certain inclinations to act unethically and immorally based on their tendencies to be unemphatic and aggressive. The negative effects of openness on moral disengagement are further explainable: a reduced sense of ethical sensitivity is showcased (Rengifo & Laham, 2022). Further research confirms the

influence of agreeableness (Egan et al., 2015). Ogunfowora et al. (2022) further assigned the incremental influence of the traits of low Honesty-Humility, moral identity internalization, conscientiousness, trait empathy, guilt proneness, idealism, and high relativism on moral disengagement. Individuals scoring high on Honest-Humility tend to showcase high integrity and have a habit of ethical decision making (Lee et al., 2008). The concept of moral identity internalization translates to internal access and knowledge of agents concerning moral constructs and their self-image of moral individuals (Aquino & Reed, 2002). Agents with conscientious character traits emphasize honor, righteousness, obedience to rules and oppose actions incompatible with moral standards (Ogunfowora et al., 2022). Empathic individuals have the ability to understand and reflect the emotions of others (Davis, 1983). Tendency to feel guilt self-regulates immoral behavior, as anticipation and internal feedback loop of own emotional reactions to certain actions (Ogunfowora et al., 2022). Forsyth (1980) states the differences of idealistically and relativistic inclined individuals and their thought processes concerning moral actions. Agents scoring high on idealism believe in universally applicable moral standards and the existence of one correct way of action on all situations, where no harm is opposed to anyone. In comparison, relativism opposes the principle of universal moral standards and argues situation- and context-based decision making (Forsyth, 1980). Thus, individuals scoring low on the above-described constructs have a fundamental tendency to morally disengage following immoral actions, as a high manifestation is showcased as internal resistance.

However, moral disengagement is not only activated via intrinsic characteristics, but can be influenced by media messages (Bandura, 2015). One of such media messages are advertisements, which have the ability to create and leverage a need for purchase. As described in the first chapter, advertisements play a crucial role in creating needs for flying or leveraging awareness. Upon aviation advertisement exposure, certain strategies of moral disengagement are activated (Stubenvoll & Neureiter, 2021). Furthermore, based on Stubenvoll & Neureiter (2021), additional need for further research exists in order to further determine the effect of advertisements on moral disengagement. Moreover, media messages frequently incorporate communication on the prices of the goods advertised. Pricing is seen as an incremental positive influence towards purchase intent and increases positive assessment of brands (Somervuori & Ravaja, 2013). Overall, airlines implement a concept called yield pricing, whereas prices are flexible based on remaining seat availability and demand for certain routes or dates (Botimer, 1996). According to Botimer (1996) this approach ensures market-based allocation of goods and maximization of revenue management from the airline perspective. However, as airline

fares are prone to display multiple changes, managing to attain an attractive air fare might be assigned with a high degree of intrinsic value. Research has determined that reducing the price of one ticket by one standard deviation, increases the ticket bookings of an aircraft by 2.7% (Bilotkach et al., 2015). Thus, lowering ticket prices or aircrafts increases its demand (Gössling et al., 2019).

Therefore, based on the price-driven increases in demand, it can be argued that attractive pricing of airline tickets can have a positive impact on the degree of moral disengagement introduced. Past research has showcased a positive factor of economic interests on unethical actions (Paharia et al., 2013). Moreover, the recognition of harmful impacts of aviation is significantly lowered when confronted with low costs, efficiency and convenience (Higham et al., 2013). Therefore, if decisions are economically driven based on low prices, individuals display a higher tendency to act immorally. Thus, it is of further interest to determine how different pricing positions of environmentally impacting purchase decisions affect moral justification, advantageous comparison, displacement of responsibilities and minimizing of consequences. Therefore, varying pricing levels of the tickets displayed in the stimuli were incorporated into the methodological and analytical part of this study.

Therefore, the goal of this thesis will be to determine the effect of images of flying presented in advertisements and establish whether and to what extent moral disengagement strategies are being activated. Additionally, it is being proposed that attractive prices have an accelerating effect on the level of moral disengagement introduced. Thus, the developed hypotheses were based on the assumption that flight advertisements have an encouraging effect on the processes of moral disengagement, which is positively influenced by the degree of pricing attractivity. Hence, the first research question reads as follows:

“Whether and to what extent is the process of moral disengagement of the flight dilemma encouraged by advertisements and accelerated by attractive pricing?”

2.4 Hypothesis development on moral disengagement

In line with the chapter discussing the various strategies of moral disengagement, certain hypothesis can be derived based on each approach's characteristics. However, not every locus named and described seems to be relevant upon the activation of moral disengagement strategies upon plane ticket purchases.

First, at the *behavior locus*, moral justification might enable moral disengagement of airplane ticket purchasing, following advertisement exposure. However, the other mechanisms at the behavior locus do not seem to be relevant. Flying is not morally justified based on the value it

brings to society. Additionally, euphemistic labeling is seldomly used in justifying the purchase of plane tickets. The language used to describe the action itself is not commonly changed. At the *agency locus*, where human individuals either displace or diffuse their own level of responsibility, has been deemed relevant to determine its effect on moral disengagement of airplane ticket purchase decision making. The *outcome locus*, consisting of minimization, distortion or misconstruction of consequences seems to be of high relevance ad hoc. Thus, the concept will be further included for possible hypothesis generation. Last, the locus of the victim does not seem to activate any moral disengagement processes at the first glance. As the foes of environmental impacts are widespread and not directly recognizable it seems more likely that strategies of the agency locus, displacement or diffusing or responsibility, are alternatively triggered. Dehumanization or blame attribution of the victim might be relevant to morally disengage of blame induced by environmental harm. However, it seems far removed from the direct action of booking a flight based on an advertisement. Thus, the research target of this thesis will not analyze how individuals morally disengage upon the purchase of aviation tickets following advertisement exposure at the victim locus.

Therefore, as basis for generating the hypotheses vital for answering the stated research question, moral justification, advantageous comparison, displacement of responsibility and minimization of negative effects have been determined as relevant. However, euphemistic labeling, advantageous comparison and dehumanization or blame attribution of the victim, were excluded based on their missing applicability to the research focus of evaluation the effect of airline advertisements on moral disengagement processes.

As discussed, individuals might morally justify their flying behavior via assigning a higher degree of intrinsic value to the perceived benefits of aviation. Social media influencers transport messages of traveling being the ultimate goal. Holidays abroad are positioned as the highlight of the year. Additionally, flying consumption itself is intrinsically valued as it enables transcendence into a club of elites discovering the world. Therefore, based on the described benefits society has assigned to flying, individuals might morally justify their traveling despite the knowledge of the environmental harm included. The expected effect would be stronger upon displaying attractively priced airline advertisements, whereas unattractively priced airline advertisements would lead to less moral disengagement, based on willingness to pay:

H1: "Exposure of flight advertisement will lead to higher moral justification. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group. "

Second, to retain a positive sense of self upon practicing air-based travelling, the harmful impact of own flights taken might mentally be reduced via comparison. If individuals compare their personal flying behavior to the one of other flyers, the effect linked to themselves becomes more acceptable. Therefore, this behavior is in line with Bandura's (2015) argumentation of advantageous comparison. Individuals might see their own flying behavior as less harmful as the one of others, who fly more frequently and should thus be attributed more blame. When being displayed with lower prices of airline tickets, it is to be expected, that the degree of reducing the harmful impact of own flights would be accelerated. Thus, the price based attractivity of the advertisement would increase the tendency to introduce advantageous comparison. The opposite is to be expected from higher priced advertisements:

H2: "Exposure of flight advertisement will strengthen advantageous comparison of flying to other environmentally harmful actions. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group."

Third, as the flyer's dilemma includes a high degree of stakeholders and thus creates a complex problem, individuals might diffuse active blame of their own actions. Henceforth, placing the responsibility of their personal actions upon other agents or spreading liability upon numerous entities. This ensures detachment of guilt based on caused harm. In contrast to the behavioral locus, agents thus recognize the immorality of their actions, but distribute or diffuse the responsibility upon other individuals. If individuals compare their personal flying behavior to the one of other flyers, the effect linked to themselves becomes more acceptable, diffusing their own responsibility. Therefore, it can be argued that individuals morally disengage at the agency locus to justify ticket purchases. Furthermore, direct harmful impacts on society are not visible to one single flyer. As Kish-Gephart et al. (2013) have determined, moral disengagement is more easily activated if the direct impact on society is clearly noticeable. Thus, individuals might attribute their personal impacts to for example the aviation industry for not building more efficient planes. Furthermore, their own environmental induced effects may thus not be attributed to themselves, but to industry actors. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis is built on said principle and the effect of attractivity of advertisements on the process of responsibility displacement. Similarly, to previous hypotheses, it is argued that the level of attractivity is positively related to the level of displacement of responsibility:

H3: "Exposure of flight advertisement will strengthen the displacement of responsibility of flying to other environmentally harmful actions. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group."

As established, existential knowledge of the environmental impact of flying exists. However, human flying behavior is not linked to abstinence. Thus, agents might minimize the negative consequences linked to their own behavior and thus mentally reduce their own responsibility. Therefore, they might see their own behavior as less impactful to retain it as it offers substantial benefit for them. A typical example would be to think of other flyers as more impactful, or other environmentally harmful actions as further damaging. Furthermore, individuals might ignore or distort the impact of their actions. The whole moral disengagement effect at the outcome locus is summarized in the minimization of negative consequences for the scope of this thesis. Again, the level of attractiveness of the advertisement is proposed as positively impacting minimizing of consequences. Therefore, it is proposed that an unattractively displayed price would lower the degree of minimizing of consequences. Thus, the fourth hypothesis is based on the activation of the minimization of negative consequences following ad exposure:

H4: “Exposure of flight advertisement will strengthen the minimizing of negative consequences of flying to other environmentally harmful actions. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group.”

3. Increasing factors of moral disengagement: hedonism

As discussed, various personal determinants influence the degree of moral disengagement in certain situations (Bandura, 2015). Different personality factors have varying effects on an individuals' inclination to morally disengage. Part of the triadic codetermination (Bandura, 2015) encapsulate personality based on biology, beliefs, values, emotional states, attitudes, and goals. To further determine how moral disengagement of purchasing flights is activated via advertisements, it can be argued that character traits play an additional role. As discussed, one of the reasons for traveling and flying is self-gratification and expression of oneself (Cocolas et al., 2020). Therefore, a person that values fulfillment of own pleasures above other principles, might be more likely to morally disengage the environmental impact of flying. Such a trait can be described as hedonic. Research has confirmed the effect of hedonism as a motivating factor for travelling (Gnoth, 1997). Therefore, it can be argued that as traveling is seen as hedonic, hedonists might have a higher tendency to morally disengage.

The subsequent chapter will derive a definition of hedonism from philosophy and literature, as well as discuss hedonism as a character trait. Furthermore, it will distinguish between hedonic

and utilitarian consumption, to subsequently link the concept of hedonism with moral disengagement in the framework of tourism.

3.1 Definition of hedonism

Hedonism is a concept deeply anchored in philosophy. Moreover, the Cyrenaics have fundamentally rooted hedonism in the interplay and value of pleasure and pain in human life (Lampe, 2014). Historically and commonly, hedonism is linked to somewhat scandalous or even vulgar preferences. This is reflected in the definition of Cormier (2014): hedonism is a some-what form of sensual self-gratification.

According to Feldmann (2004), a hedonistically focused way of living is centered around a favorable balance of pleasure over pain. A human agent assigns intrinsic value to any form of pleasure and thus attributes it positively. For any event linked to pain, the opposite takes place. Thus, every pleasurable event is seen as good. Feldmann (2004) measures pleasure in “hedons” and pain in “dolores”. The intrinsic value of either pain or pleasure is always reflected in the same amount of “hedons” and “dolores”. Hence, “greater” pleasures are intrinsically valued as better, both in intensity and duration. Again, the same applies to any events linked to pain. Overall, the idea of hedonism is that the number of “hedons” should exceed the number of “dolores” to create intrinsic value for a hedonistic way of living. Therefore, intrinsic value of life is based on the amount of either pleasure or pain experienced, whereas any other circumstance or happening does not affect any virtue assigned (Feldmann, 2004). Kahneman et al. confirm Feldmann’s view and define hedonism as the act of seeking pleasure and simultaneously avoiding pain (1999).

However, there are different directions of how hedonism can be defined. Philosophy has subdivided hedonism into three distinctions: axiological, psychological, and ethical hedonism (Tilley, 2012). Axiological hedonism holds the view of pleasure being generally good and of sole value intrinsically. Thus, no other construct is intrinsically good. The second theory of psychological hedonism states that all actions are motivated by desire for pleasure. Ethical hedonism states that every act is morally justifiable based on the pleasure it brings. Thus, it can be argued that ethical hedonism acts as an enabler of justifying the act of flying morally.

Thus, hedonism can be defined as valuing any form of intrinsic pleasure above other constructs, including pain. In order to establish a tangible understanding of how hedonism affects personalities, the subsequent chapter will derive hedonist’s traits from previous research.

3.2 Hedonic individuals & their traits

Following the definition of hedonism as a concept derived from philosophy, it is crucial to further understand how hedonically inclined individuals' minds work. Based on the definition derived a hedonist can thus be seen as a person prioritizing pleasure over other elements. Therefore, their ultimate goal is to secure and retain a positive state of mind at all costs. Schwartz et al. (2001) have defined hedonism as one of ten total values describing personalities: self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power, security, conformity, tradition, benevolence, and universalism. Based on said research hedonism is a value based upon which pleasure and sensual gratification are of primary importance. There, hedonism is situated between the categories of openness to change and self-enhancement. Utilizing the concept of Schwartz et al. (2001), medical research has examined whether and to what extent individuals brain structure differs according to their hedonic orientation. Zacharopoulos et al. (2016), have found significant correlation between hedonism and volume of certain brain structures controlling reward activation. Thus, an increase of volume in brain areas can explain specific degrees of hedonic motivation according to the study. Therefore, it can be argued that hedonists display different levels of volume distribution in their brains, accounting for their degree of hedonism. The conclusion can be made that hedonism as a trait is not only dependent on a value expression but is determined by given brain structures.

Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that hedonic personality traits lead to indulgence of consumerism without mental constraints concerning money (Autio, 2004) and reduced ability to manage own emotions (Athota & O'Connor, 2014). Said narrative shows distinct contrasts towards reflective and rational behavior, as no moral burden is opposed for hedonic traits. Furthermore, hedonic characteristics display orientation towards oneself based on self-fulfillment (Brusdal & Lavik, 2005). Research found that hedonic individuals show high degrees of extraversion (Ksendzova et al., 2015). This could be rooted in the similar value assigned to social stimulation and pleasure. Moreover, they are characterized by novelty seeking traits: hedonic individuals proactively seek out stimulating and unfamiliar experiences (Athota & O'Connor, 2014). Additionally, hedonists were found to be more impulsive, thus scoring lower on conscientiousness (Ksendzova et al., 2015). Moreover, hedonists showcase almost egoistic traits, based on which personal well-being comes first in contrast to that of other individuals (Kajonius et al., 2015). Ksendzova et al. (2015) further differentiates between two types of hedonists: maladaptive hedonists and value-based hedonists. Maladaptive hedonists utilize pleasure in an excessive way, whereas value-based hedonists simply assign a

higher degree of value to pleasure upon comparison to other goals. Findings concluded that maladaptive hedonic traits have a negative impact on implicit happiness. This is possibly rooted in their tendencies to be untrustworthy and emotionally unstable. Value-based hedonism in contrast depicted negative correlation with moral traits rooted in social conservatism, such as fairness, authority, loyalty, and purity (Ksendzova et al., 2015). Therefore, an important argument is brought forward: the profile of a hedonist can vary deeply based on the degree of excessiveness with which pleasure is sought.

Thus, hedonic personalities can be described as extroverted, consumerism-focused and pleasure-prioritizing without self-opposed moral obligations. Hedonists showcase less self-reflective and rational behavior and tend to act upon impulses to achieve certain pleasures with little emotional control. Moreover, they have ego-focused tendencies and tend to disregard needs of others or society. However, certain characteristics of their personality vary based on the degree of excessiveness with which they seek pleasure. The degree of hedonic expression varies additionally based on the volume distribution among various brain areas.

3.3 Hedonic goods

However, hedonic traits can also be linked to ways of consumption or characteristics of goods. Hirschmann and Holbrook (1982) establish hedonic consummation as consumption based on those facets of consumer behavior that can be attributed to the multi-sensory and emotional attribute assignments of products. Therefore, the attributes linked to goods or services offer intrinsic value upon consumption. According to Alba and Williams (2013), hedonic consumption is a goods-related means to an end for the fulfillment of pleasure. Furthermore, products linked to hedonic consumption are synonymous with being fun, enjoyable, and pleasant. Hedonic consumption is further rooted in the pleasure of buying, self-rewards, and amusement (Brusdal & Lavik, 2005). Hedonic goods and experiences are more likely to be purchased if their price point is lower in comparison to utilitarian items (Okada, 2005). Thus, attractive price positioning is crucial to enable demand for hedonic goods. Moreover, individuals' assess hedonic goods via affective heuristics (Hirschmann & Holbrook, 1982; Klein & Melnyk, 2014). Klein and Melnyk (2014) further determined which marketing communication strategy has an impact on purchase intent for hedonic products. As cues and heuristics are commonly used, ways to increase processing via rhetorical questions or unexpected visuals are recommended. Therefore, the communication strategies of goods linked

to hedonic consumption should further reflect both their characteristics and these of a hedonic consumer.

3.4 Hedonism as a moderator of moral disengagement

Following the definition of hedonism as a concept, its manifestations as a personality trait and the characterization of hedonic goods, the moderating effect of hedonism on moral disengagement of flight advertisements can be argued.

It can be determined that hedonism is a way of living centered around pleasure. It is rooted in personality showcasing different levels of extraversion, tendencies towards self-indulgence, egocentricity, emotional instability, and irrationality. Hedonic consumption is based on emotional attributes of goods and is dependent on processing via heuristics in advertisements. Prior research has demonstrated the positive effect of hedonism on travel intent. As travelling and the act of flying can be seen as a sort of self-gratification, it can be argued that hedonic inclined individuals might have an accelerated internal effort to morally disengage. The perception of negative environmental impacts might be further mentally reduced as it creates an obstacle towards the achievement of pleasure. Attractive pricing lowers the financial barriers to attain travel-based pleasure. Therefore, as personal pleasure evokes the highest degree of intrinsic value, it can be argued that moral disengagement strategies will be activated to achieve said pleasure. Thus, it can be hypothesized that the degree of hedonic orientation strengthens the relationship between moral disengagement strategies of flying following the exposure of attractively priced advertisements. A reduced effect is to be expected on pricier travel advertisements.

The effect of hedonism on the activation of moral disengagement strategies in the context of flying has been of little research focus on the past. As discussed, research has determined hedonism to be a motivational factor for travelling, however, without taking moral disengagement strategies into account.

Again, the same reasoning applies for introducing the structure of attractive and less attractive pricing towards the developed research scope. Aircraft ticket demand is incrementally driven by pricing. Thus, as hedonic individuals assign the highest possible value to their attainable pleasure, it can be argued that hedonic traits strengthen the relationship between attractive pricing and moral disengagement strategies. Therefore, the aspect of price based demand was also introduced to the second research question.

Overall, based on the abovementioned accumulation of theory in the previous chapter, the following second research question can be formulated as following:

“Whether and to what extent is the moral disengagement process of the flight dilemma following advertisement exposure strengthened by hedonistic character traits and accelerated by attractive pricing?”

3.5 Hypothesis development on the moderating effect of hedonism

Therefore, hedonism is seen as a possible moderator of the moral disengagement process following the exposure of advertisements. To statistically test the different, relevant levels of moral disengagement the preceding research question is split into four additional hypotheses, likewise to the first four hypotheses. Again, relevant concepts of Bandura’s (2015) work will be included, whereas certain constructs are not seen as significant. Therefore, the subsequent four hypotheses state the research focus of determining the effect of airline advertisements on the moral disengagement strategies moral justification, displacement of responsibility and minimizing of negative consequences. Moreover, the impact of manipulating prices and their proposed effects are included. Therefore, the same argumentation of implementing different displayed prices of aircraft tickets will be implemented into the second part of the hypothesis building. Thus, it can be argued that hedonism has an increasing impact on the relationship between advertisement exposure and moral disengagement strategies. Hence, the approach follows the argumentation of the subsequent chapter.

However, the effect of euphemistic labeling remains unlikely, also after the introduction of hedonism as a moderator. Such usage of language does not seem to be relevant upon the justification of airline ticket purchase decisions by hedonic individuals. Anew, the *Victim Locus* does not seem to activate any moral disengagement processes leveraged by hedonism. The argumentation follows the same line as in the previous chapter; thus, hedonism is unlikely to strengthen an improbable link between the activation of dehumanization processes of victims upon the purchase of aviation tickets following advertisement exposure. Therefore, the victim locus will subsequently be excluded anew. Thus, again, the constructs of moral justification, advantageous comparison, displacement of responsibility and minimizing of negative consequences are determined to be of relevance to ascertain whether and to what extent their impacts following advertisement exposure are strengthened by hedonistic character traits.

First, individuals might morally justify flying via the higher degree of internally assigned value. Traveling and holidays are predominantly seen as a vital occasion to achieve gratification,

relaxation, and an expansion of one's horizon by society. As hedonic orientation assigns incremental value to any form of pleasure and is a key motivator for travelling, it can be expected to have a strengthening effect on moral disengagement. Therefore, hedonic individuals might showcase an inclination to increasingly disengage morally to achieve the pleasure of travelling via flying, justifying environmental impacts. It is likely that hedonism further strengthens the positive relationship between attractively priced advertisements and moral justification. Furthermore, the relationship between attractively priced advertisements and moral justification might also be positively impacted due to hedonic traits. To clarify, hedonism might strengthen the relationship between moral justification and airline advertisement exposure.

H5: "Higher levels of hedonic orientation strengthen the effect of moral justification of flying following advertisement exposure on flying intention. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group."

Individuals might compare flying advantageously via the higher degree of internally assigned value in comparison to environmental impacts. Furthermore, as hedonic orientation both assigns higher value to any form of pleasure and shows egocentric traits, this might be more accelerated. Hedonic individuals demonstrate focus on consumption and prioritizing of pleasure without self-opposed moral obligations. Additionally, needs of society tend to be disregarded. Thus, it can be argued that individuals demonstrating a high degree of hedonic traits regard their own pleasure as incremental and thus advantageously compare it to other actions and impacts. Furthermore, if assigned with an attractively priced advertisement, this relationship is proposed to accelerate. To clarify, hedonism might strengthen the impact of an attractive advertisement on advantageous comparison:

H6: "Higher levels of hedonic orientation strengthen the effect of advantageous comparison of flying following advertisement exposure on flying intention. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group."

Again, following the same principle as the third hypothesis established in the previous chapter, individuals with hedonic orientation might increasingly diffuse their active blame of their own actions. Thus, hedonists might showcase stronger tendencies to place the responsibility of their own actions upon other agents in comparison to non-hedonically inclined individuals. This could be rooted in hedonists' tendencies to act upon impulses to achieve certain pleasures and their egoistic traits. Therefore, hedonists might attribute their personal impacts on other actors increasingly, enabled by the complexity of the flyer's dilemma and all stakeholders involved.

It is argued that hedonism positively impacts the relationship between the display of an attractive advertisement and the degree of displacement of responsibility.

H7: “Higher levels of hedonic orientation strengthen the displacement of responsibility of flying after being exposed to flight advertisements. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group.”

Hedonic orientation might expand the degree of minimization of negative consequences linked to own behavior. As discussed, hedonists display ego-centric tendencies, which could be the base for minimizing the negative consequences of individual actions. The relationship between attractive advertisement exposure and minimization of negative consequences might be expanded further based on hedonic traits. Therefore, as hedonists want to secure and retain a positive state of mind at all costs, individuals might further minimize blame of their own actions:

H8: “Higher levels of hedonic orientation strengthen the minimizing of negative consequences of flying after being exposed to flight advertisements. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group.”

Thus, over the course of the theoretical part a total of eight hypothesis have been derived from literature argued based on past research. In order to create a compact and cohesive overview, table 1 below summarizes all established hypothesis for future reference:

H1	Exposure of flight advertisement will lead to higher moral justification. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group.
H2	Exposure of flight advertisement will strengthen advantageous comparison of flying to other environmentally harmful actions. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group.
H3	Exposure of flight advertisement will strengthen the displacement of responsibility of flying to other environmentally harmful actions. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group.
H4	Exposure of flight advertisement will strengthen the minimizing of negative consequences of flying to other environmentally harmful actions. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group.
H5	Higher levels of hedonic orientation strengthen the effect of moral justification of flying following advertisement exposure on flying intention. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group.
H6	Higher levels of hedonic orientation strengthen the effect of advantageous comparison of flying following advertisement exposure on flying intention. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group.

H7	Higher levels of hedonic orientation strengthen the displacement of responsibility of flying after being exposed to flight advertisements. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group.
H8	Higher levels of hedonic orientation strengthen the minimizing of negative consequences of flying after being exposed to flight advertisements. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group.

Table 1: Hypotheses

4. Research method

Thus, following the theoretical framework and the establishment of the two research questions and eight hypotheses, the needed method to statistically test said hypotheses will be discussed. In order to answer the developed research questions, a quantitative approach has been deemed as pivotal. To derive comparisons between various displayed aviation prices, it is crucial to showcase different styles of advertisements to various groups of individuals. Moreover, a subsequent inquiry about implemented moral disengagement strategies, as well as hedonic tendencies is pivotal to provide the needed information. Further, to empirically test for significance and ensure validity, a high quantity of participants is vital. Therefore, an empirical approach in the form of a survey with an experimental setting has been determined as a favorable approach. The named method especially proves relevant when group comparisons must be made, as in the case of this thesis. Furthermore, a digital survey enables to reach a higher number of participants and can randomly assign different stimuli to each group. In conclusion, a between-subjects experimental design via an online questionnaire with three different stimuli was deemed as crucial. The in between-subjects design ensures that each participant is randomly assigned to only one of the stimuli groups.

As this thesis was a joint research project with other master students in terms of empirical investigation, the process of data collection has happened simultaneously and jointly with the other master students involved. The research approach of the participating theses included varying moderators empirically testing their impact on moral disengagement strategies following aviation advertisements of varying attractiveness. The target of participants for each student was set at 75 individuals each. The objective was to acquire a balanced quota of participants in terms of age, gender, educational status, and environmental disposition. This ensured reliability and validity of the overall findings.

4.1 Questionnaire

As discussed, an online questionnaire composed of a between-subjects experimental design with three different stimuli was determined as the methodological approach for this thesis. The structure of the questionnaire can be seen in the figure 2 below.

First participants were welcomed and provided with general information on the survey, followed by inquiries on their demographics. Second, their attitudes towards environmental issues were assessed, including the climate concern of individuals' peers. Subsequently the moderators of interest were determined, in the case of this thesis hedonism. Consequently, participants provided information on their travel behavior concerning holiday travel and air travel. Individuals were then randomly assigned to one of three stimuli groups: attractive airline advertisement, less attractive airline advertisement and control group. This was followed with an opportunity to communicate thoughts in an open question style following the stimuli exposure. Subsequently, individuals were prompted to convey both their brand evaluation and purchase intent of the showcased brand in the stimuli. The different degrees of the following moral disengagement strategies were then inquired: moral justification, displacement of responsibility and minimization of negative consequences. This was followed by an assessment of actors and their possible influence on environmental issues and an attention check. Further, participants were inquired on their recall of the mentioned prices in the stimuli and their perception of said prices. The questionnaire concluded with a note of thanks. The overall structure of the questionnaire is illustrated in the table 2 below:

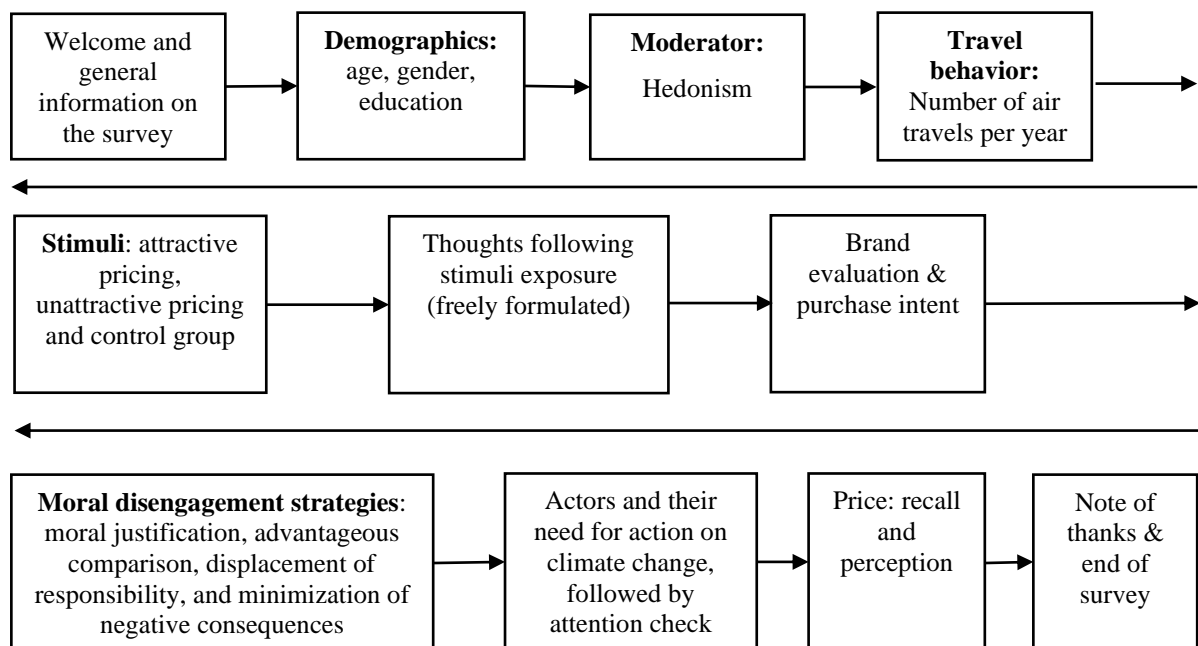


Table 2: Questionnaire structure

4.2 Research model

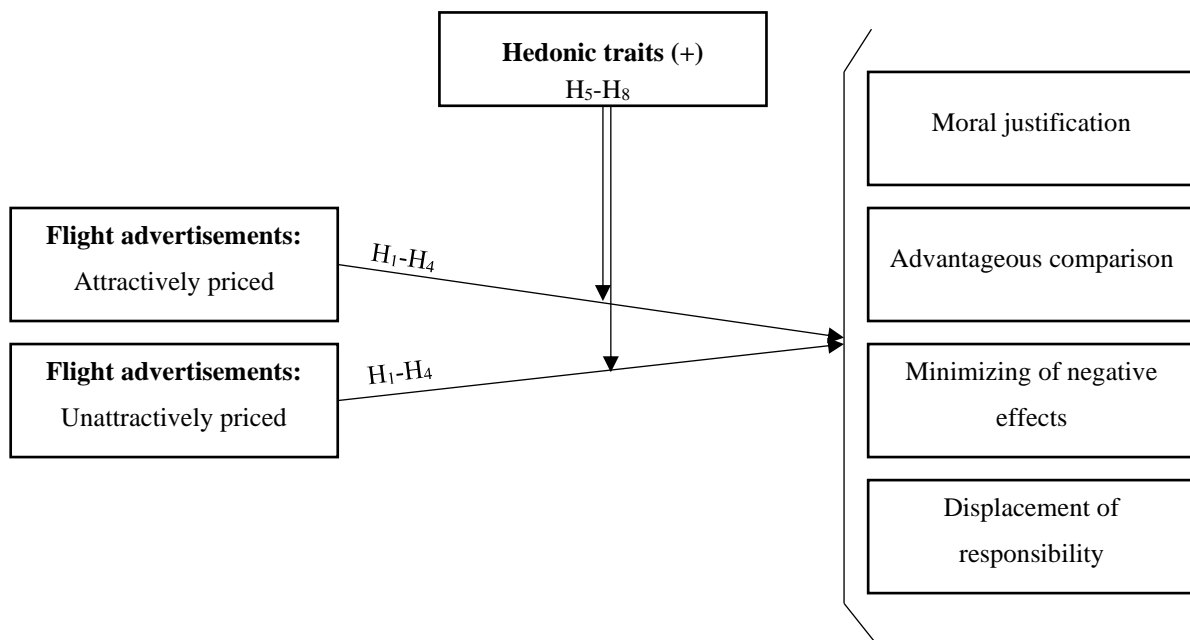


Table 3: Research model

Table 3 above showcases the proposed effect and hypothesis under investigation in this thesis. The model displays the effect of lower and higher priced flight advertisements on moral disengagement strategies. It is argued that a more attractive flight advertisement based on displayed prices leads to a higher tendency to morally disengage. In contrast, higher priced advertisements of airline tickets could lead to lower moral disengagement, based on the willingness and ability to pay of the participants. Furthermore, the argumentation is brought forward, that the individual manifestation of hedonic traits positively affects the degree of moral disengagement following advertisement exposure. Said interaction is proposed for both attractively priced advertisements and unattractively priced advertisements. As evident, the construct of moral disengagement is divided into moral justification, advantageous comparison, minimizing of negative effects and displacement of responsibility.

4.3 Measures

The following subchapter discusses the levels of measurement for the implemented scales and categorizes them as dependent, independent or control variables for the scope of the subsequent analysis.

Most scales utilized a metric Likert Scale from 1-7, whereas the questions inquiring on gender, education and brand recall of the stimuli incorporated drop-down options. The Likert scales increased from one being the lowest and seven being the highest. The inquiries on age, price recall, vacation frequency and thought listings were free to fill in.

Dependent variables

As evident from the discussed research model, the effects of advertisement exposure and hedonism on moral disengagement strategies are tested. Thus, moral disengagement is the outcome variable of this analysis. The scales for moral disengagement: minimizing of consequences, advantageous comparison, displacement of responsibility and moral justification were adapted from Stubenvoll and Neureiter (2021) and can be seen below:

Moral disengagement measures

Advantageous comparison	Please indicate how much you agree with the following sentences. - It is okay to fly in order to get to know the world in all its facets.
	Please indicate how strongly you agree with the following sentences. - It is okay to fly because everyone should learn to understand different cultures.
	Please indicate how much you agree with the following sentences. - If you never fly away, you lack experience.
	Please indicate how much you agree with the following sentences. - When you think about the environmentally harmful lifestyles of others, a plane trip hardly matters.
Moral justification	Please indicate how much you agree with the following sentences. - When you think about the environmentally harmful lifestyles of others, air travel hardly matters.
	Please indicate how much you agree with the following sentences. - Flying once a year is not so bad compared to actions others set day after day.
	Please indicate how much you agree with the following sentences. - There are far more climate damaging behaviors than flying.
	Please indicate how strongly you agree with the following sentences. - Large corporations have more impact on climate change than a long-haul flight.
Minimizing of consequences	Please indicate how much you agree with the following sentences. - I can't do much for the climate by not traveling by air.
	Please indicate how much you agree with the following sentences. - I think I can contribute something positive to climate protection by not traveling by air.
	Please indicate how much you agree with the following sentences. - It is pointless to reduce air travel as a single person.
	Please indicate how strongly you agree with the following sentences. - I can protect the climate by avoiding air travel.
Displacement of responsibilities	How important is it that the following stakeholders act immediately to reduce CO2 pollution from air travel? - Myself
	How important is it that the following actors act immediately to reduce CO2 pollution from aviation? - Governments
	How important is it that the following stakeholders act immediately to reduce CO2 pollution from air travel? - Airlines
	How important is it that the following actors act immediately to reduce CO2 pollution from air travel? - Industry and trade

Table 4: Moral disengagement items

Moderator

As an additional focus of this thesis is to determine the influence of hedonic traits on moral disengagement strategies, the scale utilized to assess the degree of hedonism will be disclosed

further. Participants' hedonic orientation will be measured using the scale first established by Schwartz et al. (2001) and further developed and tested by Tarka et al. (2022):

Hedonistic Personal Values (Hedonism), P-HED (Schwartz et al., 2001)

Hedonism	I seek every chance I can to have fun. It is important to do things that give me pleasure.
	Enjoying life's pleasures is important to me. I like to "spoil" myself.
	I really want to enjoy life. Having a good time is very important to me.

Table 5: Moderator items

Control variables

Additionally, control variables were incorporated into the moderation analysis to determine their impact on moral disengagement implementation. First, vacation frequency was inquired by asking two open-ended questions ($M = 2.45$, $SD = 5.13$), inquiring on their amounts of holidays and plane holidays in the last year. Additionally, demographics such as gender, education and age were utilized as controls in the moderation models.

4.3 Stimuli

As discussed, an in between-subjects design was deemed as crucial to enable group comparisons following varying stimuli exposure. Thus, research participants were presented with a randomly assigned video-stimulus out of three groups and subsequently answer questions. Said three groups consisted of three different variations in terms of stimuli exposure: attractive pricing in flight advertisements, unattractive pricing in flight advertisements and a control group, which received an unrelated advertisement on interior items. This ensures between group comparisons of the effect of advertisements and advertisement attractiveness on the activation process of moral disengagement. Moreover, it enables distinguishment of the control group. Furthermore, due to the direct support of University of Vienna, the stimulus material was provided to coordinate the correct exposure and ensure validity across all participating theses. Below two tables are presented, the first presents information on the various stimuli displayed to each respective exposure group. The latter displays all stimuli showcased to the participants in their assigned groups.

Group	1. Stimuli	2. Stimuli	3. Stimuli
Attractive Price	Low priced advertisement for flight to the Caribbean	Low priced advertisement for flight to the Maledives	Low priced advertisement for flight to Thailand
Unattractive Price	High priced advertisement for flight to the Caribbean	High priced advertisement for flight to the Maledives	High priced advertisement for flight to Thailand
Control Group	Advertisement for sofas	Advertisement for decoration articles	Advertisement for kitchen articles

Table 6: Stimuli groups

As evident, the group who were presented with low priced advertisements for airline tickets, examined unconventionally low prices for long-haul flights with drastic price reductions. The high-priced advertisements incorporated the same long-haul destinations within common price ranges for such flights. Both groups were showcased advertisements of the fictional airline *Avia Air*. The control group were exposed to advertisements of the retailer *Avia Design*, offering various interior items. Two of the displayed product categories included lower priced goods, whereas one of the advertisements revealed sofas. In table seven below an overview of the displayed stimuli can be found.

Low priced advertisement

High priced advertisement

Control group

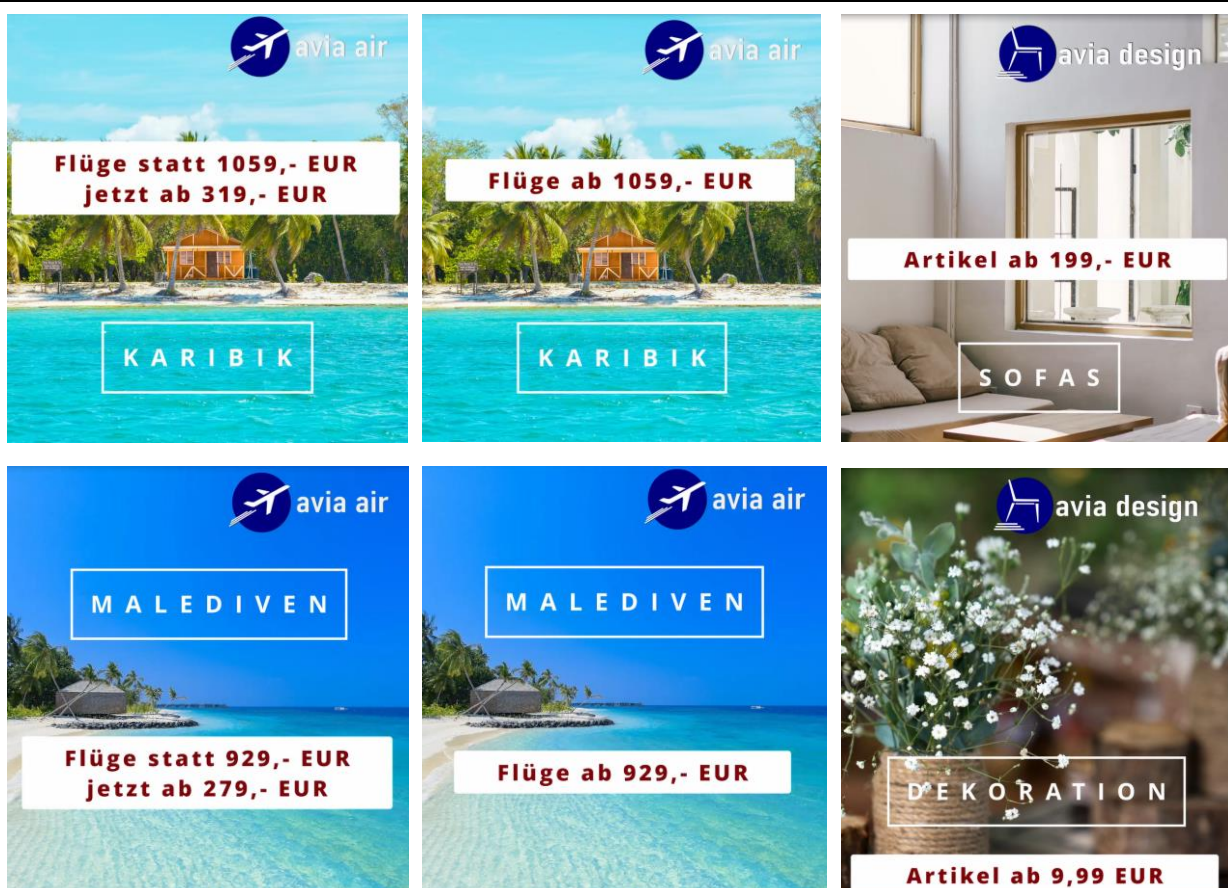




Table 7: Stimuli overview

4.5 Data collection and sample selection

The recruitment phase of participants happened simultaneously and jointly with the other students participating in the joint research process for their theses. The survey itself was distributed in German language. Starting with September 21st 2022 and ending on November 20th 2022, the survey window was thus opened for four weeks. Overall said joint approach enabled to onboard 247 individuals for participation of the conducted survey ($n = 247$). The recruitment process followed the approach of a convenience sample. Thus, a non-probability approach was utilized incorporating individuals to whom convenient access was possible. However, said procedure might integrate possible bias (Acharyya & Bhattacharya, 2020). Nonetheless, the overall goal to achieve a diverse sample considering gender, age and education was fulfilled, which will be highlighted in the achieved descriptive characteristics of the survey later on. Beforehand, a quota for gender, age and education was developed to achieve a diverse sample. The study limited the possible completion of the survey only to those individuals showcasing demographics of not yet fulfilled quotas.

The link to access the study was distributed by the study-leader to her social environment, which further distributed the link in their communities. Additionally, the study was shared in the following three Facebook groups: “Umfragen & Online-Experimente – Teilnehmer für empirische Studien finden”; “Umfragen & Umfrageteilnehmer finden” and “Studien suchen Teilnehmer – Studienteilnehmer gesucht & gefunden”.

5. Analysis

The following chapter incorporates the needed analysis to answer the eight developed research questions. The analysis itself was conducted in SPSS with the assembled data from the questionnaire.

First, the sample itself were described based on the demonstrated demographics of the participants. Subsequently, indices were created, and their reliability tested to utilize the for further calculations. In a next step it was determined whether the manipulation check worked and if the three stimuli groups of attractively priced, unattractively priced and unrelated advertisement display significant differences in price perception and brand recall. Additionally, a factor analysis was conducted to ensure significant, internal loading of all moral disengagement strategies.

The following subchapter focused on the testing of the first four hypotheses, comparing the different levels of moral disengagement strategies following airline advertisement exposure. Said part was split into description of the main effect, results of testing in SPSS and an interpretation. The last analysis part was compromised of the moderation analysis with the PROECSS tool, thus testing the last four hypotheses. Therefore, hedonism was introduced to the model with the proposed effect of strengthening the relationship between advertisement exposure and moral disengagement. Again, this chapter was subdivided into the needed prerequisites to conducting a moderation analysis, the results of the moderation analysis and its interpretation.

5.1 Descriptive statistics of the sample

Overall, a total of 247 individuals completed the survey. The individual recruiting by me amounted to fifty participants matching the pre-defined quota, out of which nine had to be excluded due to not finishing the questionnaire.

Individuals were 19 to 78 years old ($M = 41.56$, $SD = 14.34$). 36.8% identified themselves as male ($n = 91$), whereas 62.3% were female ($n = 154$). Additionally, three participants communicated their gender as divers (0.8%). As the sample had a quotation considering education as a base the distribution of educational groups was diverse. Three individuals completed compulsory schooling (1.2%), apprenticeship was accomplished by thirty-one participants (12.6%). Sixteen attended trade school (6.5%), whereas 16.2% completed their education at a secondary school ($n = 40$). Vocational secondary school was the educational choice of 41 individuals (16.6%) and 113 students with tertiary education participated (45.7%). Overall, three individuals stated to not have completed any education altogether (1.2%).

78 individual participants were part of the control group (31.6%), whereas 34.4% were exposed to the attractively priced advertisement for aircraft tickets ($n = 85$). The higher priced ad was displayed to 84 participants (34%).

5.2 Descriptive data of the indices

In order to utilize the inquired information for further analysis, single items were assembled to form an index. In the table eight below all single items and their proposed scales can be viewed. As evident, the first item of displacement of responsibility (in bold), the second and fourth item of minimizing of consequences (in bold) and the third item of price perception (in bold) have reversed polarity in comparison to the other items of their factor. Thus, they have been recoded to be in line with the direction of the other items in their shared scale. In a subsequent step all of the items were compromised to an index for further calculations. An index for price perception was created in order to implement it in testing of the manipulation check.

Scale	Item
Moral justification	Please indicate how much you agree with the following sentences. - It is okay to fly in order to get to know the world in all its facets.
Moral justification	Please indicate how strongly you agree with the following sentences. - It is okay to fly because everyone should learn to understand different cultures.
Moral justification	Please indicate how much you agree with the following sentences. - If you never fly away, you lack experience.
Moral justification	Please indicate how much you agree with the following sentences. - When you think about the environmentally harmful lifestyles of others, a plane trip hardly matters.
Advantageous comparison	Please indicate how much you agree with the following sentences. - When you think about the environmentally harmful lifestyles of others, air travel hardly matters.
Advantageous comparison	Please indicate how much you agree with the following sentences. - Flying once a year is not so bad compared to actions others set day after day.
Advantageous comparison	Please indicate how much you agree with the following sentences. - There are far more climate damaging behaviors than flying.
Advantageous comparison	Please indicate how strongly you agree with the following sentences. - Large corporations have more impact on climate change than a long-haul flight.
Displacement of responsibility	How important is it that the following stakeholders act immediately to reduce CO2 pollution from air travel? - Myself
Displacement of responsibility	How important is it that the following actors act immediately to reduce CO2 pollution from aviation? - Governments
Displacement of responsibility	How important is it that the following stakeholders act immediately to reduce CO2 pollution from air travel? - Airlines
Displacement of responsibility	How important is it that the following actors act immediately to reduce CO2 pollution from air travel? - Industry and trade
Minimizing of consequences	Please indicate how much you agree with the following sentences. - I can't do much for the climate by not traveling by air.
Minimizing of consequences	Please indicate how much you agree with the following sentences. - I think I can contribute something positive to climate protection by not traveling by air.
Minimizing of consequences	Please indicate how much you agree with the following sentences. - It is pointless to reduce air travel as a single person.
Minimizing of consequences	Please indicate how strongly you agree with the following sentences. - I can protect the climate by avoiding air travel.

Hedonism	Think about how much the following statements apply to you. - I seek every chance I can to have fun. It is important to do things that give me pleasure.
Hedonism	Think about how much the following statements apply to you. - Enjoying life's pleasures is important to me. I like to "spoil" myself.
Hedonism	Think about how much the following statements apply to you. - I really want to enjoy life. Having a good time is very important to me.
Price perception	How do you feel about these prices? - low : high
Price perception	How do you feel about these prices? - cheap : expensive
Price perception	How do you feel about these prices? - unaffordable : affordable

Table 8: Overview of items

Following, table nine demonstrates the calculated means and the standard deviation for all of the created items. As evident, participants showcased a higher tendency of hedonic traits ($M = 5.46$, $SD = 1.12$) and displacement of responsibility ($M = 5.21$, $SD = 0.68$). In contrast, price perception was seen as relatively low among participating individuals ($M = 3.17$, $SD = 1.49$).

Descriptive statistics		
	Mean	SD
Moral justification	4.37	1.50
Advantageous comparison	4.69	1.22
Displacement of responsibility	5.21	0.68
Minimizing of consequences	3.20	1.44
Hedonism	5.46	1.12
Price perception	3.17	1.49

Table 9: Descriptive data of the indices

5.3 Reliability analysis of the scales

In order to ensure reliability of the scale adopted from Schwartz (2001) on hedonism, as well as the scales utilized to inquire on moral disengagement, Cronbach's alpha was calculated. This was based on the scales being displayed in German language and thus having to be translated from their original language. A reliability analysis ensures the validity and consistency of a scale, thus, guaranteeing that the item indeed indicates the inquired traits (Field et al., 2012). The construct for measuring moral justification demonstrated a Cronbach's alpha of $\alpha = .86$. Advantageous comparison demonstrated a Cronbach's alpha of $\alpha = .75$ and further incorporated four items. Displacement of responsibility was measured with four scales and exhibits a Cronbach's alpha of $\alpha = .04$. The subsequent scale of moral disengagement,

minimizing of consequences, showcased an alpha of $\alpha = .85$ and consisted of four items. The next scale for which Cronbach's alpha was calculated, the measure for hedonic traits expressed a Cronbach's alpha of .81 and incorporated three single items. To conclude, price perception demonstrated an alpha of $\alpha = .86$, including three items.

According to Field et al. values above 0.8 have good reliability, whereas values above 0.7 are passable (2012). Therefore, three of the utilized scales show good reliability. However, the reliability of the scale displacement of responsibility needs to be investigated further. In the table ten below an overview of the respective Cronbach alphas can be found:

Reliability statistics		
	Number of Items	Cronbachs's alpha
Moral justification	4	.86
Advantageous comparison	4	.75
Displacement of responsibility	4	.04
Minimizing of consequences	4	.85
Hedonism	3	.81
Price perception	3	.86

Table 10: Reliability statistics

Stubenvoll and Neureiter (2021) had a similar problematic considering the reliability of displacement of responsibility after the recoding of the firsts item. Thus, in their research the following item was excluded: "How important is it that the following stakeholders act immediately to reduce CO2 pollution from air travel? – Myself". The same approach was implemented for this thesis, thus resulting in the following revised reliability:

Reliability statistics		
	Number of Items	Cronbachs's alpha
Displacement of responsibility	3	.75

Table 11: Revised reliability statistic

Thus, the reliability of the scale displacement of responsibility can be seen as sufficient following the exclusion of the following item "How important is it that the following stakeholders act immediately to reduce CO2 pollution from air travel? – Myself".

5.4 Manipulation check

In order to correctly test the developed hypothesis, an investigation of the effectiveness of the manipulation check is needed. Individuals were inquired which brand they were exposed to in

the stimulus, as well as their personal price perception of the showcased price and their recall of said price.

Therefore, a one-way independent ANOVA was conducted, as it enables testing of significant mean variances between independent groups. The dependent variable was thus personal price perception and price recall, whereas advertisement exposure was determined as independent variable. To conduct an ANOVA several prerequisites need to be given. First, it has to be ensured that the compared means are coming from independent groups. As all participants were exposed to either one of three stimuli, it can be confirmed that the prerequisite of independent groups is fulfilled. Moreover, more than two groups need to be compared. This is further given, as individuals were divided into three separate stimuli groups. Furthermore, the dependent variable needs to be interval-scaled. As the dependent variable, the several constructs of moral disengagement were measured utilizing a Likert-scale this prerequisite can be further fulfilled. Additionally, normal distribution of values in the groups need to be given. In appendix one the normality distribution of the variables price perception and price recall was tested with the utilization of a Shapiro-Wilk test. As the outcome displayed significance, normal distribution of the data cannot be confirmed. Thus, this prerequisite was violated. Fifth, in order to compare several independent means, homogeneity of variance needs to be given in the three independent groups. In order to test for homogeneity of variance, a Levene's test can determine the similarity of the variances (Field et al., 2012). Levene's was conducted for two groups: first, for the personal assessment and perception of the shown price in low and not low, as well as second, for the recall of the actually shown number in the stimulus. The perception of prices demonstrated insignificant levels of homogeneity of variance, thus fulfilling the last prerequisite to analyze our data with an one-way independent ANOVA ($p < 0.05$). However, the group recalling the actual displaced price showcased a significant Levene's test, thus displaying heterogeneity of variances. As distribution of normality was violated, as well as homogeneity of variances, a robust ANOVA was conducted in the form of a Welch's ANOVA. Subsequently, a one-way independent ANOVA can now express whether the manipulation check was successful.

There was a significant difference of price recall among the stimuli groups, $F(2, 151.23) = 286.19, p < .001$. Additionally, the contrast of price perception between the stimuli groups has been found to be significant $F(2, 161.83) = 63.31, p < .001$. Therefore, all three stimuli groups showcased significant differences in price recall and perception, which confirms the effectiveness of the stimulus.

Welch's ANOVA				
	Statistic	df	df2	Sig.
Price recall	286.19	2	151.23	<.001
Price perception	63.31	2	161.83	<.001

Table 12: Welch's ANOVA

Scheffé's post-hoc test demonstrated a significant difference ($p < .001$) between price recall and price perception of all stimuli groups. Mean level of price recall decreased from expensive advertisement exposure to inexpensive advertisement (-572.33, 95%-CI[-11.54, -4.19]), and from inexpensive advertisement to control group (-144.11, 95%-CI[-11.54, -4.19]).

In a next step a manipulation check was conducted on the company showcased in the stimuli. The control group was exposed to an advertisement of *Avia Design*, whereas the experimental groups were demonstrated an advertisement of *Avia Air*. Thus, an attention check was incorporated into to survey inquiring participants on the name of the company shown in the advertisement. A Chi-squared test can measure mean differences for more than two groups and a nominal dependent variable. The prerequisites for a Chi-square test are independent groups, nominal dependent variable and more than five observations per cell (Field, 2012). The fact of independent stimuli groups has already been established, the choice between brand recall (*Avia Air*, *Avia Design*) is nominal and the total number of participants per group exceeds the minimum.

As evident in the table fourteen below three individuals, which were part of the control group, indicated to have seen an *Avia Air* advertisement ($n = 3$). Similarly, one individual exposed to an inexpensive *Avia Air* advertisement recalled to have seen an *Avia Design* visual ($n = 1$). Furthermore, three participants who were showcased to an expensive ad from *Avia Air*, named *Avia Design* as presented brand ($n = 3$).

Cross table brand recall			
Group	Avia Airs	Avia Design	Total
Control group	3	75	78
Inexpensive advertisement	84	1	85
Expensive advertisement	81	3	84

Table 13: Cross table brand recall

As stated, a chi-square test was utilized to compare brand recall and stimuli group. Results demonstrate a significant relationship between brand recall and stimuli group,

$\chi^2(2) = 215.90, p < .001$. Thus, the individuals remained in the sample and have not been excluded as the manipulation check worked.

Chi-square test			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig.
Pearson Chi Square	215.90	2	<.001

Table 14: Chi-square test

5.5 Factor analysis of moral disengagement items

To ensure that the different items of moral disengagement: moral justification, advantageous comparison, displacement of responsibility and minimizing of consequences are recognized to measure the same construct, a factor analysis was additionally conducted. A factor analysis can determine the contribution one variable makes to a construct (Field et al., 2012). Thus, in a subsequent step the individual items contributing to each of the four scales of moral disengagement were incorporated into a factor analysis. This enabled the determination whether individual items add to other constructs.

Thus, a factor analysis was implemented for the 16 items measuring moral disengagement with oblim rotation. Appendix two includes a KMO-test, a calculation to test for compactness of correlation. The closer the outcome value to 1, the more the factor analysis will provide reliable outcomes (Field et al., 2012). According to Kaiser and Rice (1974, as cited in Field et al., 2012) the showcased value of .87 can be classified as meritorious. Thus, the sample size is adequate to conduct a factor analysis. Appendix three demonstrates the scree plot, whereas some unclarity arises considering the number of factors to be extracted. Thus, Kaiser's criterion will be the base for the factor extraction. The table below expresses the factor loadings following the rotation, whereas the loadings above 0.40 are in bold. Thus, these items were attributed to the following factors: minimizing of consequences, displacement of responsibility, moral justification and advantageous comparison.

Original Scale		Minimizing of consequences	Displacement of responsibilities	Moral justification
Advantageous comparison	Please indicate how much you agree with the following sentences. - It is okay to fly in order to get to know the world in all its facets.	,397	,046	,422
	Please indicate how strongly you agree with the following sentences. - It is okay to fly because everyone should learn to understand different cultures.	,577	,104	,161

Moral justification	Please indicate how much you agree with the following sentences. - If you never fly away, you lack experience.	,340	,056	,344
	Please indicate how much you agree with the following sentences. - When you think about the environmentally harmful lifestyles of others, a plane trip hardly matters.	,312	,325	,182
	Please indicate how much you agree with the following sentences. - When you think about the environmentally harmful lifestyles of others, air travel hardly matters.	,807	-,013	,013
	Please indicate how much you agree with the following sentences. - Flying once a year is not so bad compared to actions others set day after day.	,810	-,050	-,014
	Please indicate how much you agree with the following sentences. - There are far more climate damaging behaviors than flying.	,745	-,098	-,049
	Please indicate how strongly you agree with the following sentences. - Large corporations have more impact on climate change than a long-haul flight.	,780	-,097	-,106
	Please indicate how much you agree with the following sentences. - I can't do much for the climate by not traveling by air.	-,021	-,081	,733
	Please indicate how much you agree with the following sentences. - I think I can contribute something positive to climate protection by not traveling by air.	-,008	-,098	,830
	Please indicate how much you agree with the following sentences. - It is pointless to reduce air travel as a single person.	,042	-,001	,626
	Please indicate how strongly you agree with the following sentences. - I can protect the climate by avoiding air travel.	-,092	-,069	,804
Displacement of responsibilities	How important is it that the following actors act immediately to reduce CO2 pollution from aviation? - Governments	-,138	,603	-,088
	How important is it that the following stakeholders act immediately to reduce CO2 pollution from air travel? - Airlines	-,065	,559	-,229
	How important is it that the following actors act immediately to reduce CO2 pollution from air travel? - Industry and trade	-,036	,784	-,040
Eigenvalues		5.63	2.10	1.40
% of variance		37.82%	14%	9.33%

Table 15: Factor analysis

All factors with a sufficient loading over 0.4 have been displayed in bold. Thus, it can be concluded that the respective items of moral justification, minimizing of consequences and displacement of responsibilities measure similarly, as intended by Bandura (2015). However, all items from advantageous comparison do not show consistent internal loadings of its items. The first item “*It is okay to fly in order to get to know the world in all its facets.*” displays loadings into moral justification, whereas “*It is okay to fly because everyone should learn to*

understand different cultures.” expresses correlation with the items of minimizing of consequences. The two latter items do not demonstrate any loadings above the set minimum of 0.4. However, as the reliability of advantageous comparison was deemed as sufficient with a level of 0.75, the scale was not excluded for further analysis. Moreover, as demonstrated research has successfully established and tested the four constructs.

5. 6 Testing of the main hypothesis utilizing an ANOVA

In order to determine the main effects of advertisement exposure on moral disengagement, the demonstrated means of each stimulus per scale will be compared. Thus, the following hypothesis were subsequently tested:

H1: “Exposure of flight advertisement will lead to higher moral justification. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group. “

H2: “Exposure of flight advertisement will strengthen advantageous comparison of flying to other environmentally harmful actions. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group.”

H3: “Exposure of flight advertisement will strengthen the displacement of responsibility of flying to other environmentally harmful actions. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group.”

H4: “Exposure of flight advertisement will strengthen the minimizing of negative consequences of flying to other environmentally harmful actions. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group.”

Thus, in order to compare several independent means a one-way independent ANOVA was conducted. The dependent variables minimizing of consequences, moral justification, advantageous comparison and displacement of responsibilities were tested for displayed, significant differences on the independent variable, the advertisement exposure of the varying groups. Again, the needed prerequisites of an ANOVA of more than two independent groups with testing on a dependent, interval-scaled variable were given. However, as displayed in appendix four, none of the variables displayed normality in a Shapiro-Wilk test. However, according to Field et al. (2012), an ANOVA can be seen as robust against violations of normality. Additionally, a Levene’s test was again conducted to ensure homogeneity of variance. The first three groups were insignificant, thus the last prerequisite of homogeneity of variance was given $p > 0.05$. However, displacement of responsibility demonstrated a

significant Levene's test $p < 0.05$. Thus, the robust variety of an ANOVA was implemented for displacement of responsibility, a Welch's ANOVA.

5.6.1 Descriptive statistics of the main effects

Minimizing of consequences was lowest in the control group ($M = 3.06$, $SD = 1.50$), followed by the group exposed to the inexpensive advertisement ($M = 3.33$, $SD = 1.52$), tailed by the more expensive advertisement ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 1.30$). Participants morally justified the most in the higher-priced *Avia Airlines* advertisement ($M = 4.43$, $SD = 1.43$), than in lower priced advertisements ($M = 4.35$, $SD = 1.52$). The control group showcased the lowest amount of moral justification ($M = 4.43$, $SD = 1.43$). Advantageous comparison was implemented most by the control group ($M = 4.72$, $SD = 1.21$), followed by the group exposed to the inexpensive advertisement ($M = 4.68$, $SD = 1.21$) and the more expensive advertisement ($M = 4.66$, $SD = 1.26$). The last construct of moral disengagement, displacement of responsibilities, displayed the maximum expressions in the control group ($M = 5.90$, $SD = 0.84$), whereas the group exposed to the expensive stimulus showed lower values ($M = 5.67$, $SD = 1.13$). The participants who had seen the lower priced *Avia Airlines* advertisement demonstrated the lowest implementation of displacement of responsibilities ($M = 5.64$, $SD = 0.97$).

Descriptive statistic			
	Group	Mean	SD
Minimizing of consequences	Control group	3.06	1.50
	Inexpensive advertisement	3.33	1.52
	Expensive advertisement	3.19	1.30
Moral justification	Control group	4.34	1.58
	Inexpensive advertisement	4.35	1.52
	Expensive advertisement	4.43	1.43
Advantageous comparison	Control group	4.72	1.21
	Inexpensive advertisement	4.68	1.21
	Expensive advertisement	4.66	1.26
Displacement of responsibilities	Control group	6.14	0.79
	Inexpensive advertisement	5.91	0.99
	Expensive advertisement	5.87	1.17

Table 16: ANOVA, descriptive statistic

5.6.2 Results of testing of the main hypothesis utilizing an ANOVA

There was no statistically significant difference of implementation of minimizing of consequences found for the different stimuli exposures, $F(2, 244) = 0.70$, $p = .50$. Similarly, the three groups demonstrated no significant difference of moral justification, $F(2, 244) = 0.08$, $p = .92$. No significant differences of advantageous comparison were found

among the participating groups $F(2, 244) = 0.05, p = .95$. Furthermore, the groups did not express significant differences of displacing responsibilities $F(2, 160.64) = 2.03, p = .14$.

ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean of Squares	F	Sig.
Minimizing of consequences	2.87	2	1.44	0.70	.50
Moral justification	0.36	2	0.19	0.08	.92
Advantageous comparison	0.16	2	0.08	0.05	.95

Table 17: ANOVA

Robust Tests of Equality of Means				
	Statistica	df1	df2	Sig.
Displacement of responsibility	2.03	2	160.64	.14

Table 18: Welch's ANOVA

5.6.3 Interpretation of ANOVA

Based on the insignificance of all tested ANOVAS, the following hypothesis one to four have to be rejected:

H1	Exposure of flight advertisement will lead to higher moral justification. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group.
H2	Exposure of flight advertisement will strengthen advantageous comparison of flying to other environmentally harmful actions. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group.
H3	Exposure of flight advertisement will strengthen the displacement of responsibility of flying to other environmentally harmful actions. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group.
H4	Exposure of flight advertisement will strengthen the minimizing of negative consequences of flying to other environmentally harmful actions. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group.

Table 19: Hypothesis 1-4

Thus, no significant effect was found of airline advertisement exposure leveraging moral disengagement in the conducted research and sample.

According to the descriptive statistics of the moral disengagement strategies, minimizing of consequences demonstrated a higher mean score following the exposure of an inexpensive advertisement. Thus, participants in the study displayed a higher tendency to minimize the consequences of flying after watching an attractively priced advertisement. However, the control groups demonstrated the highest means of advantageous comparison and displacement

of responsibilities. Thus, the showcased advertisements of *Avia Designs* including interior items triggered higher tendencies to displace own responsibly and compare own actions advantageously. Interestingly, the participating individuals of the expensive advertisement scored highest on moral justification. Thus, the first research question of whether and to what extent is the process of moral disengagement of the flight dilemma encouraged by advertisements and accelerated by attractive pricing can be answered. Based on the conducted research no evidence was found in the sample of advertisements and attractive ticket pricing leveraging the flyer's dilemma.

5.7 Moderation analysis

Following the analysis of the main effect of advertisement exposure, a moderation analysis was subsequently conducted to additionally introduce hedonism into the research model. A moderation enables to test the combined effect of two predictors on an outcome (Field, 2012). The theory of a moderator lies on the interaction effect between a predictor on an outcome variable. Thus, a moderator can either increase the interaction between dependent, predicting variable on the outcome variable, reduce said interaction or reverse the interaction of predictor on outcome. Prior research argues that the relationship between two variables, from whom an interaction was anticipated, but demonstrated a weak relationship, can be explained by a moderator (Bennett, 2000). For this analysis the PROCESS tool by Hayes (2018) was be utilized.

Thus, it is argued that the strength of the relationship between attractive advertisement exposure and moral disengagement is positively affected by display of hedonic traits. Therefore, for non-hedonic individuals the relationship between advertisement exposure and moral disengagement could be non-existent, weakened or change direction.

Thus, the following hypotheses were tested in the moderation part of this analysis:

H5: "Higher levels of hedonic orientation strengthen the effect of moral justification of flying following advertisement exposure on flying intention. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group."

H6: "Higher levels of hedonic orientation strengthen the effect of advantageous comparison of flying following advertisement exposure on flying intention. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group."

H7: "Higher levels of hedonic orientation strengthen the displacement of responsibility of flying after being exposed to flight advertisements. The strength of said effect will be

stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group.”

H8: “Higher levels of hedonic orientation strengthen the minimizing of negative consequences of flying after being exposed to flight advertisements. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group.”

5.7.1 Prerequisites of a moderation analysis

Again, it is vital to establish whether the needed prerequisites are given in the data set before implementing the actual analysis. According to Hayes (2018), the following characteristics are crucial for conducting a moderation analysis: first, the relationship between the tested variables should approximately be linear. Second, normality of the residues is needed. Hayes (2018) furthermore names homoscedasticity and independence of groups. Said prerequisites will subsequently be analyzed.

Linearity

In order to analyze whether and to what extent the relationship between the variables advertisement exposure, hedonism and moral disengagement is linear, scatterplots with LOESS smoothing have been created. Thus, as moral disengagement consists of four constructs, linearity was tested for all four scales involved.

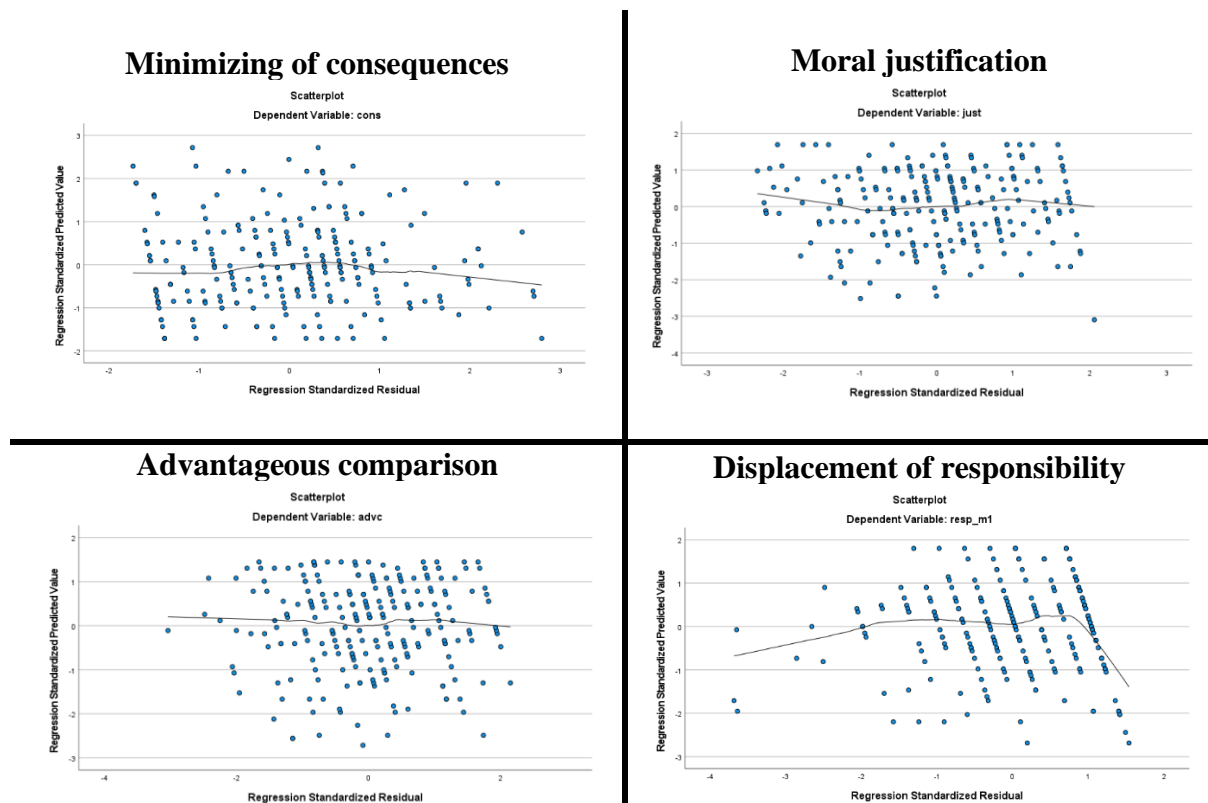


Table 20: Linearity

The relationship of the following variables advertisements, hedonism and minimizing of consequences was approximately linear, as assessed by visual inspection of the scatterplots after LOESS smoothing. Furthermore, the link between the variables advertisement exposure, hedonism and moral justification was relatively linear, as visualized by the scatterplot above utilizing LOESS smoothing. The stimuli groups, hedonism and advantageous comparison demonstrated nearly linear interconnection, as visible in the scatterplot after LOESS smoothing above. Last, the relationship between advertisement exposure, hedonism and displacement of responsibility is comparatively linear, as visualized by the scatterplot above utilizing LOESS smoothing. Thus, all dependent variables demonstrate approximate linearity, thus, fulfilling the needed assumption to correctly conduct a moderation analysis.

Normality of the residues

The subsequent prerequisite, normality of residues, calculates the normal distribution of the difference between examined value of the pendent variable and the anticipated value (Hayes, 2018). A P-P-Plot can showcase the normal distribution of the residues. Mainly severe violations influence the outcome of the statistical testing.

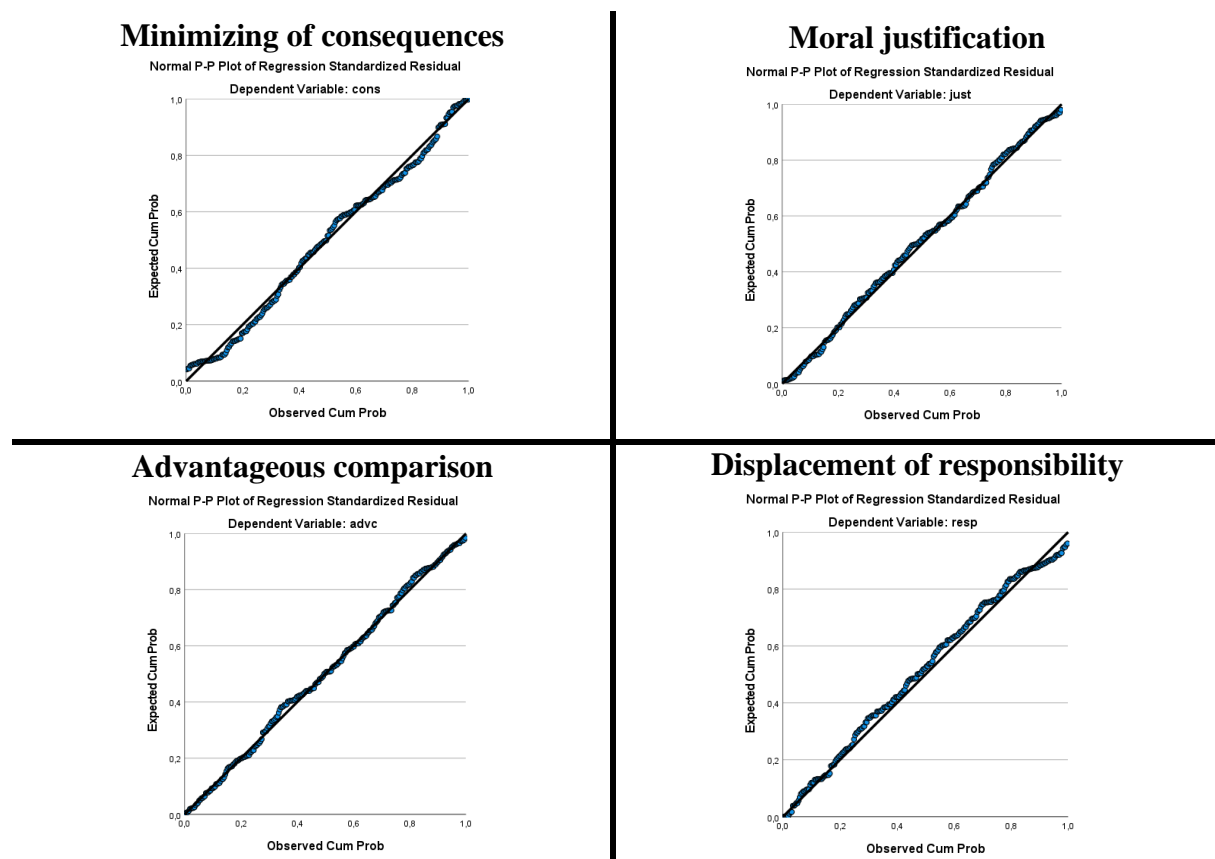


Table 21: Normality of residues

The first variable, minimizing of consequences showcases relative approach to the diagonal, thus normality of the residues can be assumed. The subsequent scale, moral justification, further demonstrates values approximately similar to the diagonal. Again, normality of the residues can be confirmed. The third P-P-Plot, based on advantageous comparison, expresses normality of the residues. The last variable for which normality of the residues has to be confirmed, displacement of responsibility, also meets the needed assumptions.

Thus, it can be concluded that the dependent variables minimizing of consequences, moral justification, advantageous comparison and displacement of responsibility showcase normality of residues, one of the needed assumptions to correctly calculate a moderation analysis.

Homoscedasticity

Homoscedasticity is the equal distribution of the residues. If heteroscedasticity is given in the data set instead, validity of inference is affected, statistical power is lowered and accuracy of confidence intervals is impacted (Hayes, 2018). Homoscedasticity can be demonstrated with the testing of variance of inflation factors.

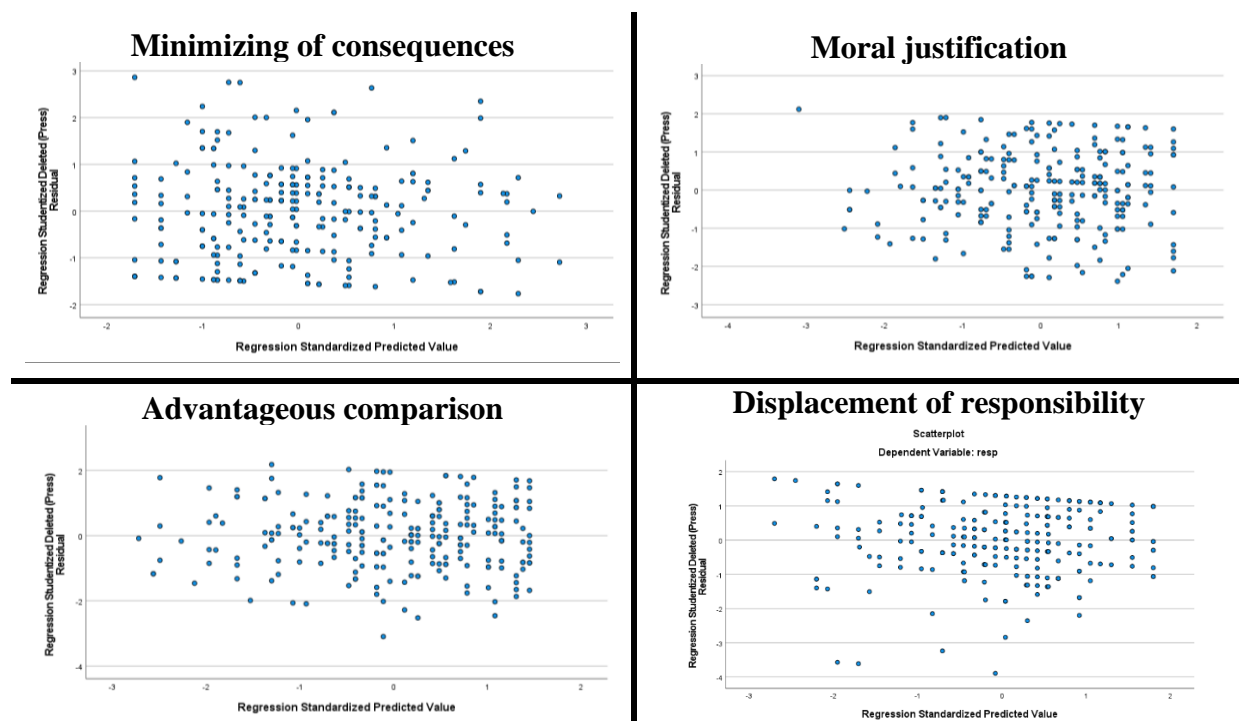


Table 22: Homoscedasticity

First, homoscedasticity has been calculated for minimizing of consequences. As visible in the scatterplot above, the data structure showcases homoscedasticity for minimizing of consequences and hedonism, based on the wide assembly of residues. Again, the assumption of homoscedasticity for the variable moral justification can be determined by the utilization of a scatterplot. As the residues are widely distributed, homoscedasticity can be assumed.

Moreover, the third variable, advantageous comparison also demonstrates homoscedasticity. Thus, this assumption can be confirmed. The last variable, displacement of responsibility, also shows approximate homoscedasticity.

Therefore, the third prerequisite in order to correctly analyse the given data with utilizing a moderation analysis can be confirmed.

Independence

The last prerequisite is the independence of errors in estimation. Thus, no estimation values of errors of the first variable can explain the estimation values of errors from the second variable (Hayes, 2018). Therefore, all needed prerequisites can be fulfilled and the subsequent step will be to enter the moderation analysis in SPSS.

5.7.2 Moderation analysis with PROCESS

Matching with the established model, advertisement exposure was determined as the independent variable (X variable) for the subsequent moderation analysis. As established, the four scales of moral disengagement are characterized as dependent variables (Y), whereas hedonism (W) acted as moderator variable. The moderator variable hedonism was mean centred in the subsequent analysis in PROCESS. For all moderation analysis the control variables ad scepticism, vacation frequency, age and gender were introduced to test their influence on the models. As moral disengagement consists of four scales, four independent moderation analysis were carried out, which can be found in the analysis below. As the direct effects of advertisement exposure on the implementation of moral disengagement have been evaluated in the aforementioned chapter conducting an ANOVA, the focal point of the following analysis will be put on the interaction effects in the moderation.

Moderation analysis moral justification

The first scale of the moral disengagement construct, moral justification, was subsequently entered in a moderation analysis. Thus, moral justification was deemed to be dependent (Y) with hedonism possibly moderating (W) the relationship between said variable and airline advertisement exposure (X). Additionally, the variables ad scepticism, vacation frequency, age and gender have been entered to act as control variables for the moderation analysis. Below in table twenty-three and twenty-four the respective outcome of said analysis is displayed:

Model Summary						
R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.30	.09	2.13	2.66	9	237	.01

Table 23: Moderation analysis moral justifiaton model summary

Model						
	Coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	4.46	.65	6.87	.00	3.18	5.74
X1	-.02	.23	-.10	.92	-.48	.43
X2	.17	.23	.72	.47	-.29	.62
Hedonism	.02	.16	.15	.88	-.29	.33
Int_1	-.03	.22	-.16	.87	-.46	.39
Int_2	.13	.20	.64	.52	-.27	.53
Vacation frequency	.12	.06	2.00	.05	.00	.24
Age	-.02	.01	-3.19	.00	-.04	-.01
Education	.09	.07	1.27	.21	-.05	.22
Gender	.08	.19	.44	.66	-.29	.45

Table 24: Moderation analysis moral justification model

It is evident that the first moderation model is significant, $F(9, 237) = 2.66$, $p = .01$, $R^2 = .09$. However, the relationship between inexpensive airline advertisement exposure and moral justification is not moderated by hedonism, $b = -.03$, 95% CI [-.46, .39], $t = -.16$, $p = .87$. Moreover, hedonism does not demonstrate moderation on the interaction effect between expensive airline advertisement exposure and moral justification, $b = .13$, 95% CI [-.27, .53], $t = .64$, $p = .52$. Controlling for age and vacation frequency expressed significance on the outcome moral justification.

Moderation analysis advantageous comparison

Following, a moderation analysis for the subsequent construct advantageous comparison was conducted. The overall model incorporated the scale advantageous comparison as a dependent

variable (Y) with the repeated moderator hedonism (W) on airline advertisement exposure (X) was significant, $F(9, 237) = 1.98$, $p = .04$, $R^2 = .07$.

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.27	.07	1.44	1.98	9	237	.04

Table 25: Moderation analysis advantageous comparison model summary

Moreover, as evident from table twenty-four below the relationship between inexpensive airline advertisement exposure and advantageous comparison is not moderated by hedonism, $b = -.24$, 95% CI $[-.59, .10]$, $t = -1.38$, $p = .17$. Furthermore, interaction between expensive airline advertisement exposure and advantageous comparison is also not moderated by hedonism, $b = -.11$, 95% CI $[-.43, .22]$, $t = -.694$, $p = .53$. However, it is noteworthy that the direct effect of hedonism on advantageous comparison has been found to be of significance, $b = .28$, 95% CI $[.03, .54]$, $t = 2.20$, $p = .03$. Furthermore, controlling for age of participants expressed significant influence on comparing advantageously.

Model

	Coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	5.02	.53	9.42	.00	3.97	6.08
X1	-.05	.19	-.25	.80	-.42	.33
X2	-.01	.19	-.06	.96	-.39	.36
Hedonism	.28	.19	2.20	.03	.03	.54
Int_1	-.24	.17	-1.38	.17	-.59	.10
Int_2	-.11	.17	-.64	.53	-.43	.22
Vacation frequency	.03	.05	.61	.54	-.07	.13
Age	-.01	.01	-2.45	.02	-.03	.00
Gender	.07	.16	.48	.63	-.23	.38
Education	.02	.06	.29	.77	-.09	.12

Table 26: Moderation analysis advantageous comparison model

Moderation analysis displacement of responsibility

For the third model, displacement of responsibility was determined as dependent variable (Y), hedonism remained the proposed moderator (W), influencing the relationship between displacement and airline advertisement exposure.

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.35	.12	.90	3.70	9	237	.01

Table 27: Moderation analysis displacement of responsibility model summary

Model

	Coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	4.23	.42	10.06	.00	3.42	5.09
X1	-.18	.15	-1.22	.22	-.48	.11
X2	-.21	.15	-1.37	.17	-.50	.09
Hedonism	.20	.10	1.96	.05	.00	.40
Int_1	-.14	.14	-.98	.33	-.41	.14
Int_2	-.08	.13	-.58	.57	-.34	.18
Vacation frequency	.02	.04	.63	.53	-.05	.10
Age	.01	.00	3.18	.00	.00	.02
Gender	.48	.12	3.87	.00	.23	.72
Education	.04	.04	.88	.38	-.05	.12

Table 28: Moderation analysis displacement of responsibility model

Again, the overall model does express significance, $F(9, 237) = 3.70$, $p = .01$, $R^2 = .12$. Subsequently, interaction effects were again analysed. The first of said effects between airline advertisement exposure and displacement of responsibility was not moderated by hedonism, $b = -.14$, 95% CI [-.41, .14], $t = -.98$, $p = .33$. No moderation was demonstrated in the second, insignificant effect as well. $b = -.08$, 95% CI [-.34, .18], $t = -.58$, $p = .57$. Here, it was tested whether the interaction between airline advertisement exposure and displacement of responsibility was not moderated by hedonism. Interestingly, hedonism expressed a significant effect on displacement of responsibility, $b = .20$, 95% CI [.00, .40], $t = 1.96$, $p = .05$. Moreover, the controls gender and age demonstrated significance.

Moderation analysis minimizing of consequences

The last scale for which the moderation analysis was be conducted, was minimizing of consequences. Thus, in this statistical test minimizing of consequences was the dependent variable (Y) and the aforementioned control variables are again entered into the model. In the subsequent tables the output of the moderation analysis can be seen.

Model Summary						
R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.21	.04	2.05	1.17	9	237	.31

Table 29: Moderation analysis minimizing of consequences model summary

	Model					
	Coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	4.40	.64	6.91	.00	3.15	5.66
X1	.21	.23	.93	.35	-.24	.65
X2	.10	.23	.44	.66	-.35	.55
Hedonism	-.10	.15	-.62	.54	-.40	.21
Int_1	.00	.21	.00	.99	-.41	.42
Int_2	.01	.20	.06	.96	-.38	.40
Vacation frequency	-.06	.06	-1.00	.32	-.17	.06
Age	-.01	.01	-2.09	.04	-.03	.00
Gender	-.29	.19	-1.61	.11	-.66	.07
Education	-.02	.07	-.36	.72	-.15	.11

Table 30: Moderation analysis minimizing of consequences model

The moderation was run to analyse whether and to what extent the interaction between hedonism and airline advertisement exposure successfully predicts minimizing of consequences.

The overall model of the moderation was not significant, $F(9, 237) = 1.17$, $p > 0.05$, $R^2 = .04$. Furthermore, the first interaction effect, between inexpensive advertisement and hedonism, was also insignificant, $b = .00$, 95% CI [-.41, .42], $t = -.00$, $p = 1.00$. This indicates that the relationship between inexpensive advertisement exposure and minimizing consequences is not moderated by hedonic traits. The second interaction effect between expensive advertisement

exposure and minimizing of consequences is insignificant as well, $b = .01$, 95% CI [-.38, .40], $t = .06$, $p = .96$. Again, controlling for age demonstrates significance.

5.7.3 Interpretation of moderation analysis

As all four of the conducted moderation analysis showcased insignificant interaction effects, all of the following hypotheses have to be rejected:

H5	Higher levels of hedonic orientation strengthen the effect of moral justification of flying following advertisement exposure on flying intention. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group.
H6	Higher levels of hedonic orientation strengthen the effect of advantageous comparison of flying following advertisement exposure on flying intention. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group.
H7	Higher levels of hedonic orientation strengthen the displacement of responsibility of flying after being exposed to flight advertisements. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group.
H8	Higher levels of hedonic orientation strengthen the minimizing of negative consequences of flying after being exposed to flight advertisements. The strength of said effect will be stronger for attractive advertisements (a) and weaker for unattractive advertisements (b) as compared to the control group.

Table 31: Hypotheses 5-8

Thus, it can be concluded that there is no sufficient confirmation or evidence in the assembled dataset that there is an effect of hedonism on the relationship between advertisement exposure and the four moral disengagement strategies in the population. Therefore, there was no moderation effect for the four moral disengagement strategies found in the conducted research. It was hypothesized that advertisement exposure (independent variable) and hedonism (moderator) would express a significant effect on predicting moral disengagement (outcome variable). However, none of the four interaction effects between advertisement exposure and the four moral disengagement strategies demonstrated significant outcomes. Thus, the research question whether and to what extent is the moral disengagement process of the flight dilemma following advertisement exposure strengthened by hedonistic character traits and accelerated by attractive pricing can be answered subsequently. No evidence of hedonic character traits expanding the implementation of moral disengagement strategies following advertisement exposure has been demonstrated in the established data set. Furthermore, no acceleration of attractive pricing was detected in the conducted research.

6. Conclusion and limitations

To conclude, it was of interest to understand how agents come to an agreement with themselves to act environmentally harmful and which internal and external processes and factors contribute to their decision-making process. The aim of this thesis was to address whether and to what extent moral disengagement processes of flying are activated via varying level of attractiveness in advertisements and leveraged by hedonism. It was hypothesized that advertisement exposure would have a strengthening effect on the activation of moral disengagement strategies. Price communication and hedonic traits of individuals were characterized as potentially accelerating underlying moral mechanisms and their impact on airline ticket purchases.

However, no statistically significant evidence was found of incorporating prices in commercial communication superseding moral knowledge. Thus, varying prices in airline advertisement communication did not demonstrate correlations to the implemented levels of moral disengagement, across all four disengagement strategies. Moreover, hedonic inclination was not found to play an incremental role in overriding moral cognition and accelerating the link between attractive advertisement exposure and moral disengagement. No evidence of internal processes being advanced by hedonic traits to justify flying across the four disengagement strategies was found.

This is partly contradictory to previous research. Stubenvoll and Neureiter (2021) demonstrated in their findings significant influence of advertisements on displacement of responsibility, whereas no significance was established for moral justification. The impact of advertisements on advantageous comparison and minimizing of consequences was significantly moderated by climate change concerns. Moreover, Wu et al. (2020) established an understanding of moral disengagement inhabiting pro-environmental behaviour of tourists. However, according to Rengifo and Laham (2022), the character trait of openness to experiences negatively impacts the implementation of moral disengagement strategies. Thus, it can be argued that people who are not open to new experiences tend to morally disengage. As travelling is seen as an opportunity to discover cultures and places, it is possible that said effects have a counteracting role. Therefore, it is possible that moral disengagement strategies are overridden, when individuals demonstrate a cosmopolitan view of life and are generally open to travelling.

Consequently, it is possible that participating individuals think that travelling the world via plane is seen as intrinsically valued and thus good. Hence, no moral disengagement strategies had to be activated for them to justify flying. Motives for airline travel are rooted in self-expression, social differentiation, exploration, novelty and authenticity (Cocolas et al., 2020).

The possibility arises that said motives have such strong predispositions, that the participating individuals did not subconsciously recognize the need to activate minimizing of consequences, advantageous comparison, displacement of responsibility or moral justification.

Another possibility lies in the psychological reactance of individuals following advertisement exposure. It is possible that individuals participating answered the questionnaire unfavourably based on internal reactance to displayed advertisements. If advertisements incorporate untrustworthy elements or deceiving techniques, negative attitudes are formed (Cho & Cheon, 2004). As the airline displayed was fictional, it can be assumed that the outcomes are biased as no trust has been previously formed between the participating individual and the service provider. Ad scepticism has a moderating effect on advertisement avoidance (Baek & Morimoto, 2012). Furthermore, it is possible that reluctance has been formed based on the uncharacteristically low prices of the attractively priced advertisement. Additionally, if advertisements are displayed without knowledge on the total duration of all advertisements and a skip option, increased negative responses based on reduced feeling of control and reactance have been found (Choi & Kim, 2021). As each participant was exposed to a total of three advertisements followed by various questions, it is possible that negative inclinations were introduced.

There are several limitations to the presented research approach. First, due to the convenience sampling it is possible that certain bias was introduced. It is possible that due to said method of acquiring a sample, certain effects have been undetected as the sample itself was not representative of the general population. Furthermore, as participants often had direct contact to the researcher, it is probable to result in over-representation of certain values and attitudes. However, due to the demonstrated diversity of demographics considering age and education, said bias is expected to be relatively low. Nonetheless, future research would benefit from a diverse sample to enable generalizability of the findings. Secondly, an online experiment does not create the same setting as a real-life situation. Participating individuals could have showcased different behaviour in comparison to how they would act in a real-life scenario. Moreover, as the stimuli displayed incorporated fictional airlines, future research would benefit from either choosing established airlines or additionally introduce a pre-test. Said pre-test could establish whether the advertisement and the displayed prices are perceived as trust-worthy and realistic. This could ensure to circumvent advertisement scepticism and thus reactance.

Furthermore, it is possible that following the limitations on travelling during the COVID-19 pandemic, travel behaviour, attitudes and beliefs have fundamentally changed. While this research was conducted in 2022, the restrictions on international air travel have been reduced

to pre-pandemic levels. Due to the fact that individuals have the fundamental perception of catching-up with missed opportunities and options during the pandemic, it is possible that participants adopted an attitude of travelling whatever the costs. Thus, displaying internal resistance to the environmental impacts of travelling, thus not activating moral disengagement altogether.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: test of normality

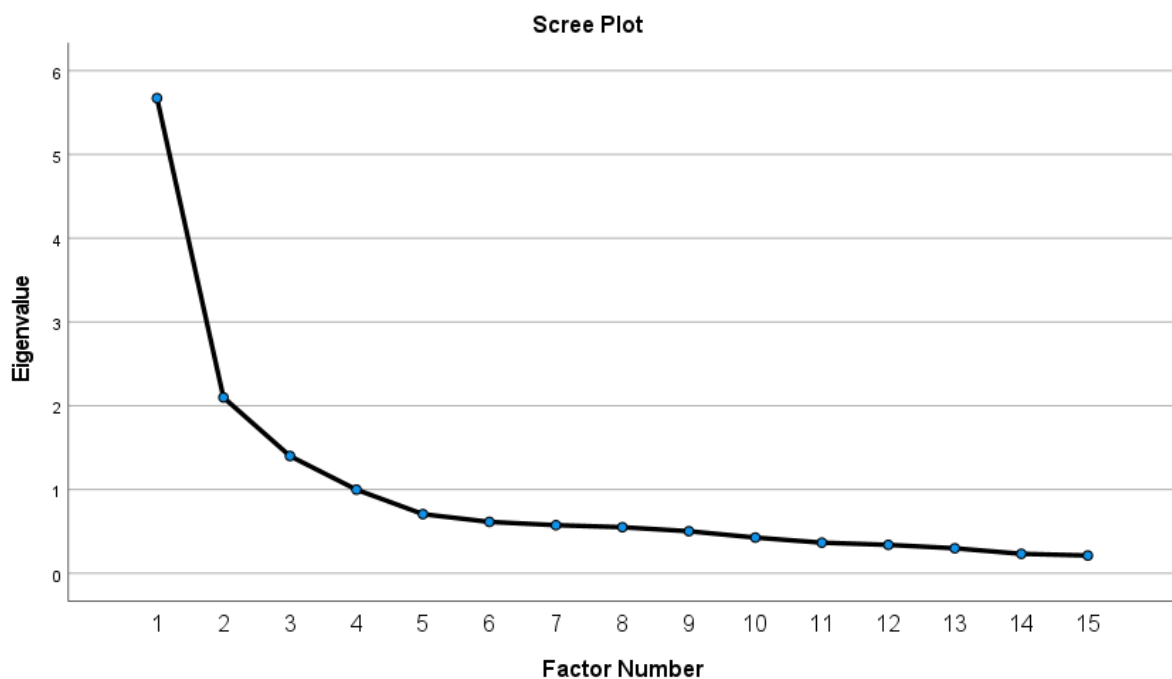
Tests of Normality						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
MC_priceperception	,112	247	<,001	,955	247	<,001
prices	,175	247	<,001	,895	247	<,001

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Appendix 2: KMO-test factor analysis

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		,864
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1681,783
	df	105
	Sig.	<,001

Appendix 3: Scree plot



Appendix 4: Test of normality

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
resp_m1	,152	247	<,001	,878	247	<,001
cons	,063	247	,020	,964	247	<,001
just	,055	247	,069	,979	247	<,001
advc	,062	247	,023	,986	247	,015

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction