



Relationship between Stages of Consumer Behaviour Model: A Study on Turkish Tourists

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Goal and objectives of the dissertation

Goal

The main goal of the research is to analyze the relationship between the five specific stages of the consumer behaviour model. In this model, motivational factors (push factors and pull factors) represent the external variables and information search, evaluation of the alternatives, purchasing (holiday experience), and post-purchasing behaviour (intentions) represent internal variables.

Objectives

The main objective of this dissertation is to understand the theoretical framework analysing the relationship between internal and external variables and also between internal variables.

Methodology

Because the literature on consumer behaviour is complex, the scale of each stage

is proposed by different models. With five main parts, the questionnaire has 62 items to measure the respondents' attitudes. These parts have been developed through the overview of various sources in the literature, namely motivation factors (Baloğlu & Uysal 1996; Kim & Lee 2002; Yoon & Uysal 2005, information search (Gürsoy & Chen 2000; Gürsoy & McCleary 2004; Gürsoy & Umbreit 2004), evaluation of alternatives (Kozak & Coşar (2009), purchasing and post purchasing (Chen & Tsai 2007; Tian-Cole, Crompton & Willson 2002; Foodness & Murray 1999; Kozak & Rimmington 2000). Through conducting a face-to-face interview, a total of 406 questionnaires were collected. All items were answered on a five-point scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5). Data analysis includes various statistical tools such as factor analysis, correlation analysis and structural equation modelling.

Results

There is a relationship between internal and external factors as well as a considerably important relationship between internal factors. Among motivational factors, having a rest by being away from the work life is the main push factor which motivates tourists while purchasing a holiday. Items such as beverages at the hotel, animation and entertainment and availability of information about holiday packages emerge as the main pull factors. Information search with the effect of motivational factor is effective over the purchasing process. Friends and relatives, radio and television, advertisements, newspapers, magazines and internet are the main information resources applied by all participants. Evaluation of information is also as effective as motivational factors on information search. Choosing a right holiday package is directly proportional to the information on hand. Holiday experience is the stage where the expectation emerged in first three stages of the purchasing process is compared with the perceived holiday experience. In this process, tourists agree that the holiday they purchased is worth the money, time and energy they have spent.

Theoretical conclusions

A consumer is one of the most important and complex units of a marketing system. As several internal and external factors affect consumer behaviour within this system, measurement and evaluation of the purchasing process is rather difficult. Consumer behaviour is not as simple as purchasing a product or service by paying its price, but is also a process that has dimensions of post-purchasing. Understanding consumer behaviour in every stage of the consumer behaviour model consisting of problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchasing and post-purchasing behaviour contributes to tourism marketers in developing products which will meet needs of consumers and in attracting more visitors and creating consumer loyalty.

Practical application of the dissertation

Many factors can affect consumers' purchasing process of a tourism product. Results show that motivation factors have an important role in the stages of purchasing process and also have positive impact on internal factors (information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchasing and post purchasing). All internal factors can affect each other in a positive direction and have a strong correlation. Among the various holiday motives, "escape" and "facilities city and hotel" seem to have played a critical role on purchasing. Internet, television and newspaper are most referenced source of information. The impact of received information on consumer holiday decision making and the source of information play a crucial role in purchasing process. Consumers have evaluated all the information which gathered on different tourism products to determine and decide how closely each available this product provides the benefits desired. Psycho-social factors have an important role in evaluation of alternatives. While the overall family decision making, emotional value, availability of a product are important factors, even after the holiday have met some external psycho-social criteria, it has evaluated by the consumer's own internal preferences. Purchasing stages can be affected by prior external and internal factors. Moreover, the motivation factors and information search are important also in the evaluation of alternatives, purchasing and post-purchasing stages as tourists look for a confirmation of the decisions made. If consumers are likely to be satisfied and have a quality holiday experience, they will share their holiday experiences with friends, family and colleagues. This positive holiday experience and their word of mouth raises awareness of the holiday package, destination and tourism product with potential future consumers.

Content of the dissertation

Abstract of chapter one

In this chapter, conceptual models are presented, and also the research hypotheses of the study are given, based on the literature

review. The first chapter includes consumer behaviour stages such as motivation factors, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchasing and post purchasing, and hypotheses of research. Prior models of consumer behaviour in tourism are explained and compared with each other.

Abstract of chapter two

This chapter presents the research methodology and the analysis of findings. A survey consisting of six sections was created in accordance with information drawn from a theoretical framework. The first five sections of the survey consist of variables in phases of consumer decision process. The second section includes questions about the demographic features of the participants.

Abstract of chapter three

This part of the study, by statistically evaluating the relationship between subjects, displays a correlation between each factor affecting the phases of the consumer purchasing decision process. Moreover, there is a positive correlation between the phases which affect each other positively. People's

desire to move away from their everyday environment is found as the most important push factor. Institutional information resources (travel agencies, internet and accommodation enterprises) are used as the most common resource of information search. Personal preferences are the most important evaluation criteria at the evaluation of alternatives stage. At the experience stage, the respondents think that the holiday met all their expectations. The post-purchasing intention is towards purchasing the same holiday one more time.

Abstract of chapter four

The last part of the study puts forward the concluding remarks as well as implications for the theoretical background, practice and future research. By analyzing tourists' purchasing decision process the assessment of findings present significant implications for the field of tourism marketing. Its significance should be noted not only for consumers and tourism enterprises but also should constitute a valuable source for tourism scholars.