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The Effects of Motivation, Satisfaction and Perceived Value on Tourist Recommendation

Shuyue Huang, Ye Shen, and Chris Choi

Abstract

This study aimed to empirically explore the effects of motivation, satisfaction and perceived value on tourist recommendation through a structural equation modeling (SEM) approach. Exploratory factor analysis was first employed to develop the measurement scale of travel motivation, with a result of three dimensions: exploration, escape and realization, and family bonding. Confirmatory factor analysis was then employed to verify the proposed factor structure of motivation before structural equation modeling. A second-order model was used when testing the causal relationships in an integrate model. The analysis results suggest that the model showed a reasonably acceptable overall fit to the data, and all hypotheses were supported at a significant level. The effects of perceived value and satisfaction on recommendation are greater than that of motivation. Additionally, motivation can be used as a predictor of recommendation. The theoretical contributions and limitations are further discussed.

Keywords

motivation, satisfaction, perceived value, tourist recommendation

Introduction

Behavioural intention is an immediate determinant and is considered to be the best predictor of behaviour in the increasingly competitive tourism market (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). It is critical to understand the determinants affecting a tourist's behavioural intention and the relationships between determinants, as positive behavioural intention is related to some important behavioural outcomes, including (1) to say positive things about the products/services, (2) to recommend them to other customers, (3) to remain loyal to them (i.e., repurchase them), (4) to spend more on them, and (5) to pay price premiums for them (Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman, 1996). Recommendations from current customers, which may be word-of-mouth, referrals or referencing, are important sources of information for other customers to evaluate business services (Dawes, Dowling, and Patterson, 1991). Customers who are willing to recommend a company and help to bring in new customers, effectively behave as ambassadors of the company. Thus, further exploration is needed of determinants that explain why current customers are willing to recommend (Buttle, 1998).

The existing literature has suggested various factors that predict behavioural intention in tourism, including quality, value and satisfaction (Cronin, Brady, and Hult, 2000; Hosany and Witham, 2010; Petrick, 2004; Silvestre, Santos, and Ramalho, 2008); familiarity and social influence (Petrick, Li, and Park, 2007); affective factors (Duman and Mattila, 2005); price sensitivity (Petrick, 2005); perceived image (Park, 2006); motivation (Hung and Petrick, 2011; Li and Cai, 2012); self-image congruence (Hosany and Martin, 2012); constraints (Hung and Petrick, 2012); and perceived control (Lam and Hsu, 2006). Among these factors, perceived value and satisfaction have been the most frequently tested as positively related to behavioural intention, while travel motivation has been proposed very recently as a determinant of behavioural intention.

Rather than testing the antecedents separately, this exploratory study focused on the recommendation dimension of behavioural intention and proposed an integrated model incorporating motivation, satisfaction, and perceived value. The causal relationships among these constructs have not yet been explored in an integrated model. This paper claimed that the behavioural outcome (recommendation) can be better explained by incorporating some related determinants into one model. The purpose of this study was to enhance the understanding of tourist behavioural intention by examining the causal relationships among the constructs, using a structural equation modeling approach in an integrated model.

Conceptual Framework

The integrated model examined in this study is presented in Figure 1. The literature review provided a theoretical background for each component of the hypothetical model. The definitions and measure scale of each construct are discussed, and the causal relationships among constructs are proposed based on the existing studies.

Insert Figure 1 here

Satisfaction, Perceived Value and Recommendation

Satisfaction is the goal of overall subjective post-consumption evaluation based on consumer experiences (Oliver, 1980). Tourist satisfaction is a crucial component of successful destination marketing, as it influences the choice of destination and the decision to revisit the destination (Yoon and Uysal, 2005). Perceived value refers to “the consumer’s overall assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received and what is given” (Zeithaml, 1988, p. 14). It can be analyzed with either a self-reported unidimensional measure or a multidimensional scale (Rasidah, Jamal, and Sumarjan, 2014).

Various studies have considered satisfaction and perceived value as determinants of behavioural intentions. For instance, Cronin et al. (2000) investigated the relationship between quality, value, satisfaction, and behavioural intention in six industries, and found that value influenced customer satisfaction and behavioural intention (in five industries). Similarly, Petrick (2004) empirically tested the same relationship in cruise tourism. After comparing three competing models for predicting behavioural intentions, Petrick found that perceived value and satisfaction directly influenced repurchase intention, and value had a positive effect on satisfaction. The positive effect of perceived value on satisfaction was also supported by Chen (2008). In summary, the results of existing studies suggest that perceived value has a positive impact on satisfaction, which further influences behavioural intentions, such as

recommendation and intention to revisit. Also, both perceived value and satisfaction are positively related to behavioural intentions. Specifically, the behavioural intentions tested in most existing studies includes recommendation as a critical component. Thus, the following hypotheses can be reached:

Hypothesis 4: Perceived value has a positive influence on satisfaction.

Hypothesis 5: Satisfaction has a positive influence on recommendation.

Hypothesis 6: Perceived value has a positive influence on recommendation.

Travel Motivation and Recommendation

Travel motivation has long been the focus of tourism study as it is recognized as an essential part to understanding a tourist's dynamic behaviour (Li and Cai, 2012). Moreover, the relationship between travel motivation and travel intention has recently been empirically tested. For instance, Hung and Petrick (2011) developed a measurement scale for travel motivation and examined the influence of motivation on travel intention in cruise tourism. Their research found that cruise motivation has a positive influence on cruising intention. Also, in investigating the relationship between outbound Chinese tourists' motivation and behavioural intention, Li and Cai (2012) identified five dimensions of travel motivation, and found the novelty dimension directly affects behavioural intention. Specifically, tourists motivated by the desire to pursue novelty are likely to revisit the destination or to recommend the destination to their friends and relatives. Thus, the following hypothesis can be reached:

H2: Travel motivation has a positive influence on recommendation.

Motivation and Satisfaction

Travel motivation has long been considered complicated and multifaceted, and is commonly examined in the push-and-pull framework (Crompton, 1979). Empirical studies have suggested that tourist satisfaction is significantly influenced by motivation (Lee, 2009). Yoon and Uysal (2005) also pointed out that the success of a destination relies heavily on the comprehensive analysis of travel motivation, satisfaction and loyalty. In their study, Yoon and Uysal developed a model to examine the relationship among push and pull motivation, satisfaction and destination loyalty through a structural equation modeling approach. The study found that "push motivations" directly affect customer loyalty to a destination, while "pull motivations" affect tourist satisfaction. Thus, the following hypothesis can be reached:

H1: Travel motivation has a direct influence on satisfaction.

Motivation and Perceived Value

The tourism industry has made a great effort to deliver value to tourists, hoping that they will have a memorable experience, and desire to revisit and recommend the destination. The perceived value of experience can include several dimensions, such as emotional, social, quality/performance, and price/value for money (Prebensen, Woo, Chen, and Uysal, 2012). To further understand perceived value in tourism, Prebensen et al. (2012) used an integrated approach to test empirically the causal relationships between the motivation, involvement, and perceived value of experience of the destination. They found tourists' motivation and involvement performance were antecedents to perceived value of their destination experience, indicating that

tourists co-created their own value experience. Furthermore, Prebensena, Woo, and Uysalb (2014) extended the scope of research on the perceived value of an on-site trip experience by considering both antecedents and consequences. Specifically, their results indicated that motivation, involvement, and tourist knowledge served as antecedents to the perceived value of a holiday experience, which influenced the consequences of behaviour, such as satisfaction and loyalty. Thus, the following hypothesis can be reached:

Hypothesis 3: Travel motivation has a positive influence on perceived value.

Study Method

Data Collection

This study used the secondary data collected in 2012 by the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation (OTMPC). The survey was designed to provide a comprehensive overview of the key Canadian (Ontario, Quebec and Manitoba) and U.S. markets. The data comprise over 300 attitudinal, behavioural and socio-demographic variables. In addition, information was collected on three overnight trips taken by the survey participants within the past 12 months. The final data set has 69,093 responses. This study focused on respondents who had taken at least one out-of-town trip in the last 12 months, generating 50,322 cases. The authors randomly selected about 4% of the sample (n=2021) for analysis. The variables employed in this study used a 1–10 Likert-type scale.

Data Analysis

The analysis variables in the proposed model include 19 attributes from the survey: travel motivation (16 items), perceived value/value for money (one item), satisfaction (one item), and recommendation (one item). First, a frequency analysis was utilized to examine the profile of the respondents. Second, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with varimax rotation was conducted to identify the underlying structure of tourists' motivation. Cronbach's alpha test was used to verify the reliability of the variables generated by the EFA. Then, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to further validate the measurement scale of motivations. Finally, structural equation modelling (SEM) was applied to verify the causal relationship in the proposed model. SPSS 20.0 and AMOS 21.0 were utilized to obtain the empirical results.

Findings

Socio-Demographic Profiles

Table 1 describes the socio-demographic characteristics of the study samples. The respondents are mainly female (64.7%), in the age group of 45 or above (49.0%), and highly educated.

Insert Table 1 here

The sample was then randomly split into two halves to utilize two-factor analysis. One-half of the data set (n = 1029) was used to conduct EFA, while the other half (n = 992) was used to perform confirmatory factor analysis (CFA).

Exploratory Factor Analysis

The factor analysis carried out for motivation was found to be suitable since the KMO test was 0.872 and Bartlett's test was significant. To determine the dimensions of motivation, principal component analysis with Varimax rotation was employed in EFA. Four items were deleted due to low factor loadings ($< .45$), high cross-loadings ($> .45$) and lower Cronbach's alpha ($< .50$). Finally, 12 items out of 16 were used for the dimension development of travel motivations, explaining 64.6% of the total variance. Table 2 demonstrates the results of EFA for motivation and the reliability test, including factor loading, eigenvalues, percentage of variance explained, corrected item-to-total correlation, and reliability alpha. The reliability coefficients ranged from .722 to .871, and all item-total correlations were above the cutoff point of .3, demonstrating satisfactory levels of internal consistency.

The three factors were labeled as exploration, escape and relaxation, and family bonding. The first travel motivation, "exploration," comprised variables that related to experiencing different people and places, and learning about local culture and history. The second travel motivation, "escape and relaxation," indicated that tourists aimed to escape from the routine life and wanted to relax and be entertained during their travel. The last travel motivation, "family bonding," included variables related to maintaining a connection with family and creating lasting memories.

Insert Figure 2 here

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

CFA was employed to verify the proposed factor structure of motivation and to examine whether any significant modifications were needed before structural equation modeling. The factor loadings are shown in Table 3. Items with low standardized regression weight and a high standardized residue were deleted (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, and Tatham, 2006). Eight of 12 motivational items were maintained for the second stage of the CFA. The average variances extracted (AVE) ranged from .467 to .574, which is around the cutoff point 0.50 for a good convergent validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). This is due to the fact that this study employed secondary data with practice focus, and future study should consider this aspect. The goodness-of-fit indices for the measurement of motivation properly meet the acceptable value suggested by Joreskog and Sorbom (1984) and Hair et al. (2006): $\chi^2 = 76.288$ ($df=16$), $p < 0.001$, comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.979 and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.062.

Insert Table 3 here

Structural Equation Modeling

Second-order SEM was used to test the proposed hypotheses. This model includes four factors with 11 items. As we predicted, positive path coefficients were found between independent variables and the dependent ones, including motivation \rightarrow satisfaction, motivation \rightarrow perceived value, motivation \rightarrow recommendation, satisfaction \rightarrow recommendation, perceived value \rightarrow satisfaction, and perceived value \rightarrow recommendation (see Figure 2).

Insert Figure 2 here

The analysis results suggest that the model shows a reasonably acceptable overall fit to the data (RMSEA=0.051, IFI = 0.971; NFI=0.960, CFI=0.971) (see Table 4). All

the path coefficients were significantly different from zero with t-values greater than 1.96, and all hypotheses were supported ($p < 0.05$).

Insert Table 4 here

Conclusion

This study extends the theoretical and empirical evidence on the causal relationships among travel motivation, satisfaction, perceived value and recommendation. This study empirically tested an integrated model that incorporated motivation, satisfaction, and perceived value into the larger field of tourist behaviour. The findings show that the effects of perceived value and satisfaction on recommendation is greater than that of motivation. In addition, as proposed, the results reveal that motivation can be used as a predictor of recommendation.

The limitations of this study provide directions for future research. First, the proposed model was tested in the specific context of Ontario overnight tourists; however, this study could be replicated in other tourism settings to achieve greater generalizability. Secondly, recommendation is one dimension of behavioural intention; future studies could test the effects on behavioural intention of other comprehensive indicators that are frequently examined by researchers in studies on consumer behaviour in tourism. Another improvement could be achieved through the test of perceived value, which was operationalized as a single-item scale (value for money) in this study. Even though perceived value was also used as a uni-dimensional construct in previous studies, most studies prefer to consider it as a multiple construct. Moreover, as mentioned in the introduction, various factors affect the behavioural intention. Future research should consider incorporating other factors into the model, such as perceived constraints, attitude, and social influence. Finally, this empirical study used secondary data that was not designed specifically for the proposed model. Thus, future studies should consider developing a new survey that reflects several issues: (1) finding theoretical support for the item development of motivation, (2) using multiple dimensions of behavioural intention and perceived value, and (3) incorporating other determinants of behavioural intention suggested by the literature.

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Figures and Tables

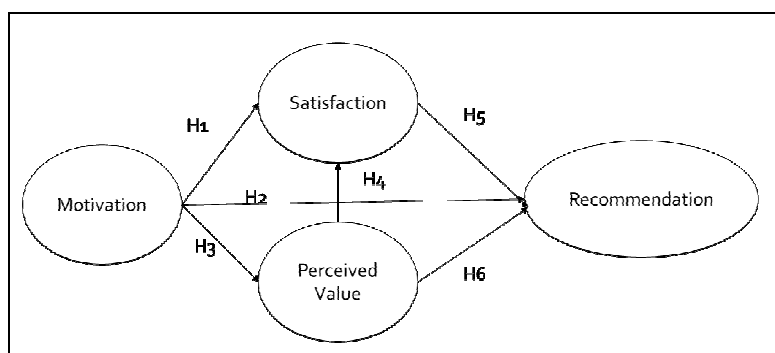


Figure 1. *The conceptual model.*

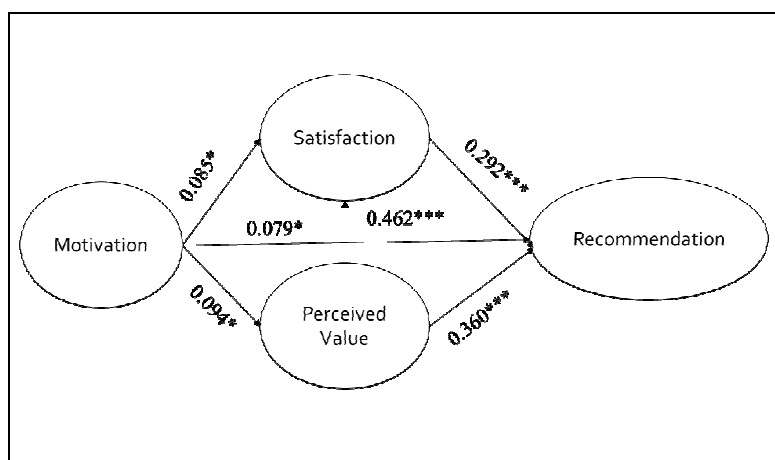


Figure 2. *Structure model with estimated path coefficient.*

Table 1. Demographic and Socioeconomic Characteristics of Sample.

Characteristics	%	Characteristics	%
Gender			
Male	35.3	Female	64.7
Age		Education	
18-24	3.3	High school or less	20.8
25-34	12.8	Some college and university	37.3
35-44	14.7	University degree	24.4
45-54	20.2	Graduate degree	11.3
55-64	24.8	Other or not stated	6.2
65+	24.2		

Table 2. The Exploratory Factor Analysis Results of Motivation Scale.

Factor or item	Loading	Eigenvalue	Variance explained (%)	Corrected item-to-total correlation	Reliability alpha
Factor 1: Exploration		4.704	39.199		.844
To gain knowledge of history, other cultures or other places	0.847			.508	
To explore and learn	0.819			.646	
To experience different ways of life	0.815			.547	

To stimulate your mind / be intellectually challenged	0.752			.512
To see or do something new and different	0.733			.626
Factor 2: Escape and relaxation		1.957	16.310	.871
To relax and relieve stress	0.808			.498
To re-energize	0.778			.545
To be pampered	0.715			.386
To have fun and be entertained	0.527			.522
Factor 3: Family Bonding		1.089	9.076	.722
To stay connected with family	0.839			.386
To enrich your relationship with your spouse / partner / children	0.819			.465
To create lasting memories	0.585			.636

KMO Sampling Adequacy test = 0.872; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity - $\chi^2 = 4676.372$, $p < 0.001$; Total variance explained = 64.6%

Table 3. Convergent Validity of Motivation Scale.

Construct and indicator	Std. coeff.	AVE
Exploration		0.574
To experience different ways of life	0.754	
To explore and learn	0.850	
To stimulate your mind / be intellectually challenged	0.671	
To gain knowledge of history, other cultures or other places	0.746	
Escape and relaxation		0.467
To have fun and be entertained	0.760	
To relax and relieve stress	0.597	
Family Bonding		0.487
To create lasting memories	0.804	
To enrich your relationship with your spouse / partner / children	0.572	

Table 4. Goodness-of-Fit Indices and Results of Structural Model.

Hypothesis	Standardized	t-value	Result
H1: MOT → SAT	0.085	2.547*	Accepted
H2: MOT → REC	0.079	2.524*	Accepted
H3: MOT → PV	0.094	2.476*	Accepted
H4: PV → SAT	0.462	16.422***	Accepted
H5: SAT → REC	0.292	9.856***	Accepted
H6: PV → REC	0.360	12.203***	Accepted

*=p < 0.05; ***= p < 0.001; $\chi^2 = 139.521$ (df = 39), $p < 0.001$; IFI = 0.971; NNFI = 0.960; CFI = 0.971; RMSEA = 0.051