

Sharing Tourism Experience through Social Media: Consumer's Behavioral Intention for Destination Choice

Mohammad Tipu Sultan, Farzana Sharmin, Ke Xue

Abstract—Social media create a better opportunity for travelers to search for travel information, select destination and share their personal experiences of the travel. This study proposes a framework which describes the relationships between social media, and positive or negative tourism experience sharing impact on destination choice. To find out new trends of travelers behavioral intention, we propose an extended theoretical model, the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA). We conducted a survey to analyze three external factors, subjective norms, and positive and negative experience influence on travel destination choice. Structural questionnaire analysis was employed to confirm the proposed research hypothesis within the relationship between consumer influences on the shared experience of social media. The results of the study confirm that sharing positive experiences influence the positive effect of destination choice, while negative experiences decrease the destination selection option. The results indicate that attitudes, subjective norms are passively influenced by shared experience. Moreover, we find that sharing live pictures of travel experiences through social media helps to reduce negative perceptions of the destination brand. This research contribution is useable to the research field as a new determination factor and the findings could be used by destination organization management (DMO) to enhancing their tourism promotion through social media.

Keywords—Destination choice, tourism experience sharing, Theory of Reasoned Action, social media.

I. INTRODUCTION

EXPERIENCE sharing and online reviews have significantly altered tourism selection behavior of choosing a destination from competing alternatives [1]-[3]. Numbers of research have discussed the influencing factors of destination choice including travelers shared experience in social media [4]-[10]. One study evaluated the value of tourists' blogs information sources by analyzing the tourist experience and assess their influence on the decision-making cognitive process of prospective tourists [11]. To understand how social media can influence the travel arrangement and travel purchase behavior of consumers, one study demonstrated that around 33% of buyers are influenced by social content sites when making purchase choices [12]. Shared experience influences the travel planning process by

trusting the information that is posted on social media [13]-[15]. Another study recommended that social media have a strong and trustworthy influence on consumers' decision-making behavior to destination choice [5]. Consumer shared experience and opinion (i.e. friends, colleagues, etc.) are often considered more trustworthy and reliable than information provided by suppliers of products and services, because consumers are considered to provide more honest information [16]-[18]. Positive experience sharing improve the tourists' perceptions of the travel destination trust among potential travelers, so on-line experience sharing or comments or opinion provided by different users has an important influence on the online sales of tourism product [19], [20]. Previous studies have examined the importance and influence of tourist shared experience or eWOM on hospitality and tourism purchase decision making [4], [21], [22]. However, in the existing tourism literature, a few studies have focused on travelers' online experience sharing factors which influencing destination choice process. For example, Wang and Fesenmaier [23] found that sharing enjoyment is the major motivation for travelers to make contributions to the online community. Similarly, Gretzel et al. [24] examine how other travelers' reviews inform the trip planning process. They found that reviews are used mostly to inform accommodation decisions. Comparatively, little research has investigated the positive and negative experience sharing influence on social media regarding travel experience. One research showed that identification and internalization are critical determinants that positively increase actual travel-experience sharing on social media as mediated by perceived enjoyment [25]. Another research found that positive emotions and feelings associated with experiences such as excitement are a critical component of memorable tourism experiences [18]. Others research has found that tourists remember both positive and negative emotions and feelings associated with their experiences [26].

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND CONCEPTUAL MODEL

To define travel behavior, researchers have proposed a variety of extensions of the TRA, including attitudes, subjective norms, and social norms [27]-[29]. This theory is one of the most significant theoretical frameworks for predicting human behaviors [30]. Behavioral intention is directly influenced by two components: attitudes and subjective norms. We apply this theory to examine the factors influencing an individual's behavior to a specific context when a person's intention to perform a specific type of

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behavior [31]. Limited research examined the attitudes of positive and negative travel experience sharing in social media to determine destination choice domain. Most of the researchers focus on the attributes of eWOM, or destination image [32], [33]. To fill the gaps in the literature, we propose an extended TRA model including positive experience and negative experience as external factors.

A. Positive and Negative Experience Sharing

Shared information on social media has a positive or negative influence. Consumers' want to reduce perceived risk by others recommendations [34], which influence people's subjective and global evaluations of positive and negative affective reactions [35]. For instance, Diener and Emmons examined the correlations with external variables supported the relative independence of positive and negative affect in people's lives [36]. Positive and negative feelings are social-psychological prosperity.

B. Attitude

An individual's attitude is related to individual likes or dislikes about an object [37]; this is how we feel about the behavior and is generally measured as a favorable or unfavorable mindset. Social psychologists refer to the attitudes as conforming behavior. Consumer attitude is an important psychological factor that influences travel behaviors.

C. Subjective Norm

Subjective norm is defined as how the behavior is viewed by our social circles, such as family and friends are often an influencing factor in one's travel intentions and behaviors [38], and influence positively or negatively to the person's attitude [29]. The norms followed by people that are acceptable to the people around him, opinion about what important others.

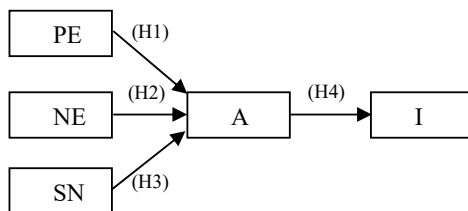


Fig. 1 The theoretical research model (TRA). SN-Social Norm, PE-Positive Experience, NE-Negative Experience, A-Attitude, I-Intention

D. Intention

Behavioral intention connects an individual's intentions to perform or not to perform a behavior. This factor recognized as an important mediator in the relationship between behavior and attitude, subjective norm [39], [40]. In addition, consumers shared experience has a positive and negative influence on purchase behavior. Based on this discussion we propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Positively shared travel experience has a positive influence on consumers' attitude.

Hypothesis 2: Negatively shared travel experience has a negative influence on consumers' attitude.

Hypothesis 3: Subjective norm has a positive influence on

consumers' attitude.

Hypothesis 4: Consumers' attitude has a positive influence on consumers' destination choice intention.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Measurement

A self-administered survey was conducted in October - November 2018 to investigate the positive or negative influence of shared travel experience on social media to destination choice of potential travelers. A total of 220 questionnaires were collected. Ten questionnaires were rejected because they were incompletely filled in. A structured questionnaire was developed for collecting two types of information. The first part contains demographic information and social media using activity. The second part contains five sub-sections to measure the influencing factors. The first and second sectors, positive experience share and negative experience share on social media about tourism were measured by four items, respectively, which were adopted from previous studies [41], [42], and modified according to the research objectives. Third, the attitude about travel experience sharing section has five items also extracted from previous studies [29], [41]. Fourth, destination choice intention was measured by four different items, as proposed by [22]. Based on the scale items, the survey respondents rated the importance of the factors using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

B. Data Sample

A survey was used as an instrument and administered at the local university to the undergraduate and graduate students. A total of 220 questionnaires were collected, an incomplete response was omitted from the sample, resulting in a final sample size of 210 respondents. The demographics of the sample are shown in Table I.

TABLE I
KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE (PERCENTAGES) N 210

Demographic characteristics		Gender	n	(%)
A	Gender	Male	121	57.6
		Female	86	41.0
		Total	210	100.0
B	Age group	<20	72	34.3
		20–30	123	58.6
		31–40	13	6.2
		51–60	2	1.0
		Total	210	100.0
C	Education	High School	19	9.0
		Diploma degree	7	3.3
		Bachelor degree	163	77.6
		Master degree	17	8.1
		Doctoral degree	4	1.9
		Total	210	100.0

IV. FINDINGS

A. Respondents Profile

The respondent was selected randomly. Table I shows the demographic characteristics of 210 respondents.

The sample had the following characteristics:

A demographic profile of survey participants is summarized in Table I. The most significant number of responses was the age group 21-30 years, with 58.6% of the total of responses, while the ages from <20 years consisted of 34.3%, the group 31-40 years old approximately 6.2% and the older age group reached the lowest percentage at 1%. As per the education level, the majority of the respondent have completed a Master's degree (77.6%), and 9% were completed school.

B. Positive Travel Experience Sharing Influence

TABLE II DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS		
Item	Mean	Std. Deviation
P1	4.30	0.633
P2	4.13	0.752
P3	4.20	0.709
P4	4.13	0.620

TABLE III HYPOTHESIS 1 TESTING			
Correlations			
	AT	PE	
AT	Pearson Correlation	1	0.195**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.005
	N	210	210
PE	Pearson Correlation	0.195**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.005	
	N	210	210

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

To assess hypothesis one (Positively shared travel experience has a positive influence on consumers' attitude), the Pearson correlation test was employed. The significant level $p < 0.001$ evidencing that positively shared travel experience has positive correlations on consumers' destination choice decision ($r = 0.195$, $n = 210$, $p = 0.005$). As a result, hypothesis H1 accepted.

C. Sharing Negative Travel Experience in Social Media

TABLE IV DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS		
Item	Mean	Std. Deviation
N1	4.17	0.684
N2	3.95	0.756
N3	4.04	0.694
N4	4.06	0.706

To assess hypothesis two (Negatively shared travel experience has a positive influence on consumers' attitude), the Pearson correlation test was employed. The significant level $p < 0.001$ evidencing that negatively shared travel experience has negative correlations on consumers' destination choice attitude ($r = 0.188$, $n = 210$, $p = 0.006$). As a result hypothesis H2 accepted.

TABLE V
HYPOTHESIS 2 TESTING

Correlations			
		AT	NV
AT	Pearson Correlation	1	0.188**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.006
	N	210	210
NV	Pearson Correlation	0.188**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.006	
	N	210	210

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*D. Influence of Subjective Norm*TABLE VI
DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation
SN1	4.05	0.724
SN2	3.75	0.828
SN3	3.56	0.718
SN4	3.73	0.850

TABLE VII
HYPOTHESIS 3 TESTING

Correlations			
		AT	SN
AT	Pearson Correlation	1	-0.006
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.930
	N	210	208
SN	Pearson Correlation	-0.006	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.930	
	N	208	208

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

To assess hypothesis three (Subjective norm has a positive influence on consumers' attitude), the Pearson correlation test was employed. The significant level $p < 0.001$ evidencing that subjective norm has no positive correlations on consumers' destination choice attitude ($r = -0.006$, $n = 210$, $p = 0.930$). As a result hypothesis H3 rejected.

*E. Destination Choice Intention*TABLE VIII
DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation
A1	3.88	0.801
A2	4.13	0.720
A3	4.12	0.777
A4	4.13	0.730
A5	3.98	0.767

TABLE IX
HYPOTHESIS 4 TESTING

Correlations			
		AT	INT
AT	Pearson Correlation	1	0.275**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	210	210
INT	Pearson Correlation	0.275**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	210	210

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

To assess hypothesis four (Consumers' attitude has a positive influence on consumers' destination choice intention), the Pearson correlation test was employed. The significant level $p < 0.001$ evidencing that consumers' attitude has positive correlations on consumers' destination choice intention ($r = 0.275$, $n = 210$, $p = 0.00$). As a result hypothesis, H4 accepted.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of travel experience sharing in social media that impacts travel destination choice behaviour, and examines which factors are most influential. A number of findings can be derived from this study. The most remarkable findings in this research are that travelers' intention is influenced by positive and negative experience, respectively. On the other hand, subjective norm does not have significant influence on the shared travel experience on a traveler's destination choice intention. Based on the existing research results, this is an opposite finding [43]-[45].

V. IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The new extended TRA conceptual framework could be useable to find new determination factors of consumers' behavior. On the other side, the research finding could be helpful for destination management organizations (DMO) to enhance their tourism promotion through social media.

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