

Research Paper



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INFLUENCE, EFFECT AND LEVEL OF SATISFACTION OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN SELECTION OF AIRLINES

Meena Priya¹

¹Research Scholar, Department of Commerce, Chikkanna Government Arts College, Tirupur, Tamilnadu, India

Dr. R. Jayachandran²

²Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Chikkanna Government Arts College, Tirupur, Tamilnadu, India

ABSTRACT

Over the years, online marketing has grown in importance in the tourism industry. This media space offers companies throughout the tourism value system numerous marketing tools, one of the most recent being social media. Social media allows companies to interact directly with customers via various Internet platforms and monitor and interact with customer opinions and evaluations of services. (Kristian A Hvass, Ana M Munar 2015).

KEYWORDS: *tourism industry, customer opinions, telecom, technology, traveller*

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Over the years, online marketing has grown in importance in the tourism industry. This media space offers companies throughout the tourism value system numerous marketing tools, one of the most recent being social media. Social media allows companies to interact directly with customers via various Internet platforms and monitor and interact with customer opinions and evaluations of services. (Kristian A Hvass, Ana M Munar 2015).

The speed and personal touch offered by social media has made it an increasingly attractive option for customers. According to Twitter, there has been a 59% increase in the number of tweets aimed at brands and service handles in the travel, transportation, and hospitality sector between March 2013 and February 2015 (the fifth-highest rate of growth, ahead of telecom, technology, and retail). Simply Measured found that the first six weeks of 2014 saw a 41% increase in Twitter mentions of the Interbrand 100 top brands compared to the same period in the previous year, and a 33% growth in Twitter responses over the same period (exceeding

Twitter's overall growth of 27.7% between 2013 and 2014, per Pew Research Center). According to the Sprout Social Index, in the first two quarters of 2015, the number of social messages sent to brands increased globally by 21%. The 40 largest airlines on social media generated 2.8 million results on Twitter over a three-month period. (<http://www.conversocial.com>).

1.2 NEED FOR THE STUDY

There were many factors which influence the traveller to select the airline or book a seat and order food. When he/she catches the airline in the airport his/her entire wish has been set well in advance and he will have a comfort journey. The researcher wanted to analyse the relationship between the traveller's choice in selection over airlines through social media, its effects and the encountered satisfaction.

The various dimensions which include in the choice of selection of airlines were Information through social media, Accumulated Information, Promotion of Communication, Faithful Information, Differentiation in opinion. The level of satisfaction dimension include the factor groups viz., External and Internal attributes.



Skillful employee and willful marketing strategies, Value added benefits, Technology link, Dynamic procedural impacts and Sheer ply. The dimension effect includes the factors like Individual Aptitude of airlines, Comfort Expertise and Benefit Quadrant.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To analyse the relationship between the influence of social media in selection of airlines, effect and the level of satisfaction.

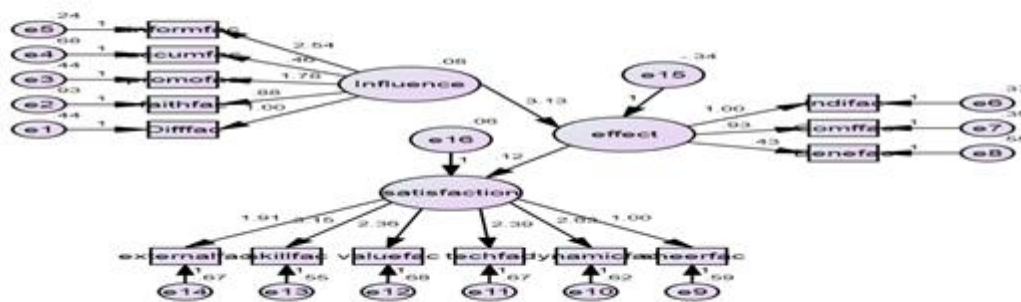
1.4 SAMPLE SIZE

The travelers who board the flight in Coimbatore Airport was selected as respondents covering 1230 travellers.

1.5 TOOLS USED

The Structural equation modelling was used to analyse the relationship between the influence of social media in selection of airlines, effect and the level of satisfaction. Structural model or path analysis is employed to estimate the strength of the casual relationship among unobserved or latent variables of dependent and independent variables.

1.6 PATH DIAGRAM



In order to analyse the objective the hypotheses was set. They were listed as follows.

H1: Influence factor has a positive relationship over Effect factor.

H2: Effect factor has a positive relationship over level of satisfaction.

1.7 THE STRUCTURAL MODEL PATH DIAGRAM

The structural model shown in the above figure shows the hypotheses formulated. Before moving on to the structural model analysis it is necessary to understand the structural model path diagram. SEM is actually the graphical equivalent of its mathematical representation whereby a set of equations relates dependent variables to their explanatory variables. In reviewing the model presented in the figure, it can be seen that there are three unobserved latent factors and 14 observed variables. These 14 observed variables function as indicators of their respective underlying latent factors. Associated with each observed variable is an error (e15, e16). Errors associated with observed variables represent measurement error, which reflects on their adequacy in measuring the related underlying factors. Residual error terms represent error in the prediction of endogenous factors from exogenous

factors. For example the residual error (e15) in the below figure represents error in prediction of effect (the endogenous factor) from Influence (the exogenous factor).

1.8 STRUCTURAL MODEL – HYPOTHESIS TESTING

Next the SEM was conducted on the structural model using AMOS 20 to test the hypothesis formulated as shown in the figure. In reviewing the SEM path model it can be seen that effect factor is influenced by influence and level of satisfaction is influenced by effect factor. All these paths reflect finding in the literature and the model shown in the below figure represents only the structural portion of the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).

1.9 TESTING STRUCTURAL RELATIONSHIPS

The hypothesized research model exhibited good fit with observed data. All the two hypothesized paths are significant (p value < 0.001), and hence supported. The standardized regression weights of the output and result of the hypotheses testing providing support for Hypotheses H1 and H2 is presented in the below table.

AMOS output Extract :Standardised Regression Estimates of the Hypothesis Tested.

No	Hypotheses	Path coefficients (β value)	Supported / Not Supported
H1	Influence factor has a positive relationship over effect factor.	0.000	Supported
H2	Effect factor has a positive relationship over satisfaction factor.	0.000	Supported

All hypotheses are accepted. In summary of the research, a theoretical model was proposed for establishing a research model that gives a good understanding of factors that influence the effect over level of satisfaction.

1.10 ASSESSING OVERALL MEASUREMENT MODEL FITNESS

The results shown in the below table provide a quick overview of the model fit, which includes the value (4320.084), together with its degrees of freedom (75) and probability value (0.000). Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) obtained is 0.704, AGFI is 0.586, NFI, RFI, CFI, TLI are 0.591, 0.504, 0.595 and 0.508 respectively. RMSEA is 0.215 and RMR is 0.135.

1.11 CONCLUSION

From the analysis it could be understood that the, Influence factor has a positive relationship over effect factor. Effect factor has a positive relationship over satisfaction factor. In other words the various dimensions which include in the choice of selection of airlines was Information through social media, Accumulated Information, Promotion of Communication, Faithful Information, Differentiation in opinion has a significance over the factors like Individual Aptitude of airlines, Comfort Expertise and Benefit Quadrant . And the Individual Aptitude of airlines, Comfort Expertise and Benefit Quadrant has significance over external and internal attributes, Skillful employee and willful marketing strategies, Value added benefits, Technology link, Dynamic procedural impacts and Sheer ply.

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