



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Management

A STUDY ON PREDICTING BEHAVIOURAL INTENTION TOWARDS ECO-TOURISM BASED ON THE THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOR

KEY WORDS: Behavior, Eco-tourism, Intention, Attitude

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the behavioral intentions towards eco-tourism based on the theory of planned behavior. The study was conducted in an eco friendly Hotel located in Tamil Nadu, India, which is known for its tradition and kindness from mere shelter to unique experiences. Simple random sampling was used for the study and data was collected from 137 individuals of different age groups ranging from above 20 irrespective of their gender, education, marital status and occupation. From this research, it can be concluded that, the factors that have a certain influence over the Behavioral Intention of the people towards Ecotourism. This is a positive impact, thus it can be helpful in predicting the behavior and their willingness to participate in ecotourism since the hotel is practicing the concept. On analyzing the demographic statistics it is clear that majority of the respondents belong to the age group of 31 to 40 years with a strong business background and government profiles. So it is very clear half of them are Gen-Y. Therefore they are the potential target for the future developments in this green practices concept.

INTRODUCTION

Eco tourism is a form of tourism with aim to protect natural resources. Eco destinations are made for those tourists that are interested in specific environment, culture, history or other element of the society in the specific region rather than in attractive hotels or administrative centers. Ecotourism takes up between 5% and 10% of the global travel market place (Hultman, Kazeminia & Ghasemi, 2015) and has become one of the fastest-growing sectors in the tourism industry (Das and Chatterjee, 2015), with an annual growth rate of 5% worldwide, almost three times faster than general tourism (Hultman *et al.*, 2015). The study was conducted in an eco friendly Hotel located in Tamil Nadu. Taking cues from the Theory of planned behavior, this study is conducted to find out influence of attitude, perceived behavioural control, subjective norm and environmental beliefs on behavioural intentions.

Review of literature

Ecotourism, a particular kind of tourism, closely related with environmentally and culturally sensitive areas, contributes to environmental conservation and ecological sustainability (Reimer & Walter, 2013), as well as to the economy.

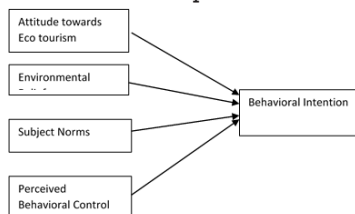
While a few studies found a weak relationship between environmental attitudes and behaviour (e.g., Manaktola & Jauhari, 2007), there are studies exploring consumer attitude and behaviour towards green practices in the lodging industry in India.

Empirical research demonstrates that values and indirect effects exert a direct affective influence on consumer behaviour (Allen & Ng, 1999). In addition, subjective norms consist of the pressure on the individual to conform to the expectations of people who are important to him/her (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975)

Ajzen (1991) indicated that attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control positively affect behavioural intention, which in turn positively affects actual behaviour.

Research Methodology

Simple random sampling was used select the **sample** for the study from selected population. The total samples used for this study are 137 individuals of different age groups ranging from above 20 irrespective of their gender, education, marital status and occupation.



Hypothesis

H0: There is no significant influence of attitude on behavioural intention.

H1: There exists significant influence of attitude on behavioural intention.

H0: There is no significant influence of Perceived Behavioural Control on behavioural intention.

H2: There exists significant influence of Perceived Behavioural Control on behavioural intention.

H0: There is no significant influence of subjective norm on behavioural intention.

H3: There exists significant influence of subjective norm on behavioural intention.

H0: There is no significant influence of Environmental belief on behavioural intention.

H4: There exists significant influence of Environmental belief on behavioural intention.

Data analysis and interpretation:

Data has been analysed using SPSS software to arrive at meaningful conclusions.

Spearman's Rank Correlation

(I) Rank Correlation of Environmental Belief And Behavioral Intention

Table 1 Rank Correlation of Environmental Belief and Behavioral Intention Correlations

| Envi_Bel | | Behav_Inten | |
|-------------|---------------------|-------------|--------|
| Envi_Bel | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .552** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 |
| | N | 137 | 137 |
| Behav_Inten | Pearson Correlation | .552** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | |
| | N | 137 | 137 |

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

Inference

The correlation table indicates that there exists a strong positive correlation between Environmental Belief and Behavioral Intention with a Spearman's Rank Correlation $r = 0.552$.

(ii) Rank Correlation of Perceived Behavioral Control and Behavioral Intention

Table 2 Rank Correlation of Perceived Behavioral Control and Behavioral Intention

| Behav_Inten | | Perceived | |
|-------------|---------------------|-----------|--------|
| Behav_Inten | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .455** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 |
| | N | 137 | 137 |
| Perceived | Pearson Correlation | .455** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | |
| | N | 137 | 137 |

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

Inference

The correlation table indicates that there exists a strong positive correlation between Perceived Behavioral Control and Behavioral Intention with a Spearman's Rank Correlation $r = 0.455$.

(iii) Rank Correlation of Subjective Norms and Behavioral Intention

Table 3 Rank Correlation of Subjective Norms and Behavioral Intention

| Behav_Inten | | Subjective | |
|-------------|---------------------|------------|--------|
| Behav_Inten | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .470** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 |
| | N | 137 | 137 |
| Subjective | Pearson Correlation | .470** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | |
| | N | 137 | 137 |

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

Inference

The correlation table indicates that there exists a strong positive correlation between Subjective Norms and Behavioral Intention with a Spearman's Rank Correlation $r = 0.470$.

(iv) Rank Correlation of Attitude and Behavioral Intention

Table 4 Rank Correlation of Attitude and Behavioral Intention Correlations

| Behav_Inten | | Attitude | |
|-------------|---------------------|----------|--------|
| Behav_Inten | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .437** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 |
| | N | 137 | 137 |
| Attitude | Pearson Correlation | .437** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | |
| | N | 137 | 137 |

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

Inference

The correlation table indicates that there exists a strong positive correlation between Attitude and Behavioral Intention with a Spearman's Rank Correlation $r = 0.437$.

Table 5 Summary of Correlation Correlations

| Behav_Inten | | Envi_Bel | Perceived | Subjective | Attitude |
|---------------------|-------------|----------|-----------|------------|----------|
| Pearson Correlation | Behav_Inten | 1.000 | .552 | .455 | .470 |
| | Envi_Bel | .552 | 1.000 | .384 | .379 |
| | Perceived | .455 | .384 | 1.000 | .680 |
| | Subjective | .470 | .379 | .680 | 1.000 |
| | Attitude | .437 | .519 | .298 | .328 |
| Sig. (1-tailed) | Behav_Inten | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | Envi_Bel | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | Perceived | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | Subjective | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | Attitude | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|-------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| N | Behav_Inten | 137 | 137 | 137 | 137 | 137 |
| | Envi_Bel | 137 | 137 | 137 | 137 | 137 |
| | Perceived | 137 | 137 | 137 | 137 | 137 |
| | Subjective | 137 | 137 | 137 | 137 | 137 |
| | Attitude | 137 | 137 | 137 | 137 | 137 |

From the table, it is observed that all the independent variables are positively correlated with Environmental Behavior. Positive correlation means if the independent variable increases then the dependent variable also increases. If the independent variable decreases then the dependent variable also decreases.

Regression

Regression analysis was used for estimating the relationships among variables.

Table 6 Regression Coefficient Table Coefficients^a

| Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | t | Sig. |
|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|------|------|-------|
| Model | | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | .184 | .318 | .579 | .563 |
| | Envi_Bel | .321 | .076 | .344 | 4.209 |
| | Perceived | .101 | .062 | .150 | 1.622 |
| | Subjective | .143 | .071 | .188 | 2.017 |
| | Attitude | .130 | .068 | .152 | 1.914 |

a. Dependent Variable: Behav_Inten

Table 7 Regression Table Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | .642a | .413 | .395 | .36777 |

Inference

From the above Table no 7, R Square value is found to be 0.413 and hence it denotes that the Independent Variables Attitude, Perceived Behavioral Control, Environmental Belief and Subjective Norms together influence in predicting Behavioral Intention to an extent of 41.3%. Therefore these variables cannot be neglected. From Table 6, it can be inferred that Environmental Belief and Subjective Norms are having significant predicting power in influencing behavioural intentions.

Anova

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test the differences between two or more means.

Table 9- ANOVA Table ANOVA

| Sum of Squares | | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|--------|-------------|-------|-------|
| Envi_Bel | Between Groups | .728 | 3 | .243 | .943 |
| | Within Groups | 34.227 | 133 | .257 | |
| | Total | 34.955 | 136 | | |
| Perceived | Between Groups | 8.734 | 3 | 2.911 | 6.574 |
| | Within Groups | 58.898 | 133 | .443 | .000 |
| | Total | 67.632 | 136 | | |
| Subjective | Between Groups | 7.466 | 3 | 2.489 | 7.313 |
| | Within Groups | 45.264 | 133 | .340 | .000 |
| | Total | 52.730 | 136 | | |
| Behav_Inten | Between Groups | 1.128 | 3 | .376 | 1.709 |
| | Within Groups | 29.267 | 133 | .220 | .168 |
| | Total | 30.395 | 136 | | |

Inference

It is interpreted that there are statistically significant differences between the means of variables Perceived Behavioral Control and Subjective Norms.

Findings and suggestions

Findings

- It is found that among the 137 respondents most of them were of the age group between 31-40 years. They were about 34%.
- The majority was male of about 53% and female respondents were about 47%.
- No one respondent were found to be educated less than undergraduate. Almost 68% of them were Undergraduates and the rest were Postgraduates.
- The respondents of about 27% were Government Officials and 26% of them were Business Owners.
- Out of 137 respondents 77% were bachelors and only 23% were married.
- About 62% of the interviewed samples had booked directly in the hotels for their stay and 38% had come through some packaged booking.
- Most of the guests stayed for 3 days and 2 nights.
- On the basis of Gender Subjective Norms has a significant difference between them towards Behavioral Intention.
- On the basis of Marital Status there are significant differences among the variables Perceived Behavioral Control, Subjective Norms in Behavioral Intention.
- On the basis of Holiday Mode they chose there are no any significant differences among the variables.
- The variables here have a strong influence in predicting the Behavioral Intention to an extent of 41.3% since the R square is 0.413.
- Though all the variables are having influence, Perceived Behavioral Control and Subjective Norms are the ones with major influence.

Suggestions

- Since it is found that most of the respondents were single and not yet married, the hotel should concentrate on attracting the married as well as family people who would like to spend leisurely.
- The age group of the majority of respondents was between 31 – 40 years. So it is observed that people of young and healthy are more likely to visit. So necessary strategies should be taken to make it more familiar and friendlier for elderly people.
- Almost 80% of the guests in the hotel are from Bangalore who wants to escape themselves from the hectic life in the city. So they would prefer this hotel because of its green infrastructure and its outlook for a weekend getaway.
- So the hotel management should consider this and use different methods to attract new and as well as retain the existing guests.

CONCLUSION

From this research one can find the factors that have a certain influence over the Behavioral Intention of the people towards Ecotourism. This is a positive thing that this research can be helpful in predicting the behavior and their willingness to participate in ecotourism since the hotel is practicing the concept. And while analyzing the demographic statistics it is clear that majority of the respondents were of age group between 31 to 40 with a strong business background and government profiles. So it is very clear half of them are Gen-Y. Therefore they are the potential target for the future developments in this green practices concept.

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