

Consumer Buying Behavior on Travel Products Through Online Travel Agencies

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Abstract - The advancement of technology and the internet have changed the way people travel and one of these is the rise of Online Travel Agencies or OTA. It is a travel website dedicated to the selling of travel-related products and services including hotel accommodations, airfare, tour packages, lifestyle deals, and attractions. The researcher examines the consumer buying behavior in online travel agencies in Metro Manila into four specific variables: culture, psychological, social, and personal. This study aimed to evaluate the level of agreement on consumer buying behavior on travel products purchased from online travel agencies. It used the descriptive method and the main tool used to gather data was a researcher-made instrument. The questionnaire was distributed to the respondents during the COVID-19 pandemic. Social media, specifically Facebook groups that target residents, workers, and students in Metro Manila, were used to disseminate the survey form. Frequency, Percentage, Weighted Mean, and Pearson Correlation Formula were used as statistical tools. The majority of the respondents were female, aged 26-35 years old, single, working in private institutions, and earning a monthly salary of P15,001 to P25,000. It was implied that the respondents agree with their assessment of the buying behavior of travel products through online travel agencies in terms of personal, social, cultural, and psychological aspects. The study also revealed that there is no significant difference in respondents' assessment of consumer buying behavior on travel products purchased through online travel agencies when they are grouped according to profile.

I. INTRODUCTION

According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the tourism industry has continued to grow over the years, making it one of the fastest-growing sectors and industries in the world. With the travel and tourism industry becoming increasingly competitive, buying behavior and customer preferences are of greater interest to this industry. The advancement of technology and the internet have changed the way people travel. The travel industry has changed over the years and one of these is the rise of Online Travel Agencies or OTA.

Law et al. (2004) defined OTA as a travel website dedicated to the selling of travel-related services including hotel accommodations, airfare, tour packages, lifestyle deals, tickets, and attractions. Some of the leading OTAs in the region include Booking.com, Agoda, and Expedia.

Based on the rapid development and advancement of technology and competition in the tourism industry, shows a significant impact on consumer behavior and purchase intention. This study intended to assess the consumer buying behavior who purchase travel products through Online Travel Agencies in Metro Manila. Specifically, it attempted to answer the following questions. First, what is the profile of respondents in terms of age, gender, civil status, occupation, average monthly income, frequency of buying online, travel destination, and frequency of travel for the last two years. Second, how do the respondents assess the consumer buying behavior on travel products through online travel agencies in Metro Manila in terms of personal, social, cultural, psychological aspect. Lastly, is there a significant difference in the respondents' assessment of consumer buying behavior on travel products purchased through online travel agencies when they are grouped according to profile? The paper hypothesis is there is no significant difference in the respondents' assessment of consumer buying behavior on travel products purchased through online travel agencies when they are grouped based on their profile.

II. LITERATURE SURVEY

This study anchored on the model of consumer behavior that determines the effect on the purchasing decisions of the consumers. This model examines different factors that affect the consumer buying process. Consumer behavior, as defined by Philip Kotler (2011), is the study of how individuals, groups, and organizations choose, purchase, utilize, and discard goods, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy their needs and wants. Kotler & Armstrong (2004) outlined the factors that affect consumer behavior, they defined personal, cultural, social, and psychological aspects have a significant influence on consumer behavior. These factors will help to determine the buyer's response to whether to purchase or not to purchase. Human behavior includes consumer behavior and by analyzing buying behavior, companies may predict how consumers would act in the future when making purchasing decisions.

This study aimed to evaluate the level of agreement on consumer buying behavior on travel products purchased from online travel agencies. It used the descriptive method and the main tool used to gather data was a researcher-made instrument. The questionnaire, in Google form, was distributed to the respondents. Social media, specifically Facebook groups that target residents, workers, and students in Metro Manila, were used to disseminate the survey form. After the distribution of the online questionnaire through different Facebook groups, a total of 523 responses were gathered of which 385 were selected as those with valid and complete answers. The Cochran's formula is

$$n_0 = \frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2}$$

Where:

e - the desired level of precision (i.e the margin of error_

p - the (estimated) proportion of the population that has the attribute in question,

q - 1 - p.

$((1.96)^2 (0.5) (0.5)) / (0.05)^2 = 385$

Frequency, Percentage, Weighted Mean, and Pearson Correlation Formula were used as statistical tools. Since the sampling technique is random, the respondents were anyone who purchased travel products through online travel agencies. The respondents were described in terms of their demographic profile such as age, gender, civil status, occupation average monthly income, frequency of purchase, types of travel destination, and frequency of travel for the last two years before the COVID-19 pandemic.

III. CONCLUSIONS

The majority of the respondents were Female, aged 26-35 years old, single, working in private institutions, and earning a monthly salary of P15,001 to P25,000. The respondents purchase from an online travel agency yearly and usually go on domestic trip. The respondents “Agree” with their assessment of buying behavior on travel products through online travel agencies in terms of personal, social, cultural, and psychological aspects. There is no significant difference in respondents’ assessment of consumer buying behavior on travel products purchased through online travel agencies when grouped according to profile.

The researcher recommends to OTAs to evaluate the demographic profile of their target market. Strategic decisions can help online travel agencies’ managers in developing effective marketing strategies that drive customer loyalty and increase intentions to purchase travel products through OTAs by helping them understand the demographic profile of their target customers. Moreover, researcher recommends Small & Medium Tourism Enterprises (SMTEs) to consider a partnership with reputable online travel agencies to benefit their business operation such as efficiently selling and advertising products and services and exploring the opportunity to widen the market and able to increase sales.

IV. REFERENCES

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